

J. Robinson

SOCINIANISM UNSCRIPTURAL:

OR, THE
PROPHETS AND APOSTLES

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Vindicated from the Charge of holding the
Doctrine of CHRIST's mere Humanity: *k*

BEING

La Fletchere

THE SECOND PART

OF A

(J. L. G.)

Vindication of HIS DIVINITY;

INSCRIBED TO THE

REV. DR. PRIESTLEY,

BY THE

Late REV. JOHN FLETCHER,

VICAR of MADELEY, SALOP.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

In a large DETAIL of INSTANCES,
A DEMONSTRATION

OF THE

Want of Common Sense in the NEW TESTAMENT
WRITERS,

On the Supposition of their BELIEVING and
TEACHING the abovementioned DOCTRINE:

IN A

SERIES OF LETTERS

TO THE

REV. MR. WESLEY,

BY JOSEPH BENSON.

If any Man speak, let him speak as the Oracles of GOD.

BIRMINGHAM:

Printed by E. JONES, in Bull Street, 1794.



P R E F A C E.

THE Reader will easily observe that the following Letters, by the late Mr. *Fletcher*, are almost all unfinished, and that they are here presented to the Public in a very imperfect State. It is much to be regretted, especially that the *last* of them is so incomplete, as only two of the Epistles of St. *Paul* have been considered, and very many Passages of great Importance upon this Subject, and such as afford incontestable Proof our Lord's Divinity, are to be found in those that remain untouched. It is true, many of these Passages have been introduced in the former Part of this Work, published last Year, and have been there improved, in some measure, in Defence of that important Doctrine; yet still, as this was done by an inferiour Hand, and not by the masterly Pen of Mr. *Fletcher*, and done too in the dry, didactic, Form of a Treatise, and not in the free, familiar, and more agreeable Method of epistolary Writing, the Friends of our Lord's Divinity cannot but consider it as a Loss to the Church of Christ, and therefore as an afflictive Providence, that this able and pleasing Writer was not spared to go through with the Epistles of the Great Apostle of the Gentiles, and, by putting the

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finishing

finishing Hand to these interesting Letters, fully to rescue him as he has done the other Apostles out of the murderous Hands of those who so miserably mangle his Writings, and stab his Character.

St. Paul has for many Ages been looked up to with Respect, as an *Apostle*; as a *Christian*, as a *Scholar*, and as a man of *Genius* and *Parts*. But this new Socinian Doctrine, still more adventurous than the old, dares to strip him of his Honour in all these Respects. It degrades him as an *Apostle*, for it denies that he wrote by Inspiration; as a *Christian*, for it makes him an Idolater; and an Encourager of Idolatry; as a *Scholar*, for it affirms he Reasons inconclusively; and as a Man of *Genius* and *Parts*; for if it is to be credited, he had not even *Common Sense*, or, at least did not write as if he had.

This last particular, which, as far as I know, has not yet been touched upon in the present Controversy between Dr. *Priestley* and his Antagonists, I have attempted to set in a clear Point of View in some Letters which I have annexed to these of Mr. *Fletcher*. I have thought, that in doing this; I should, perhaps, render a more essential Service to the Cause of Truth, than if, endeavouring to follow Mr. *Fletcher's* Plan, and prosecute the Subject in his Method, I should make such Additions to his Letters as would be necessary to render them in some tolerable degree complete. Indeed I had two Reasons for declining this. The first was, that the former Part, already published, being enlarged beyond what Mr. *Fletcher* had intended, had in some Measure precluded the Necessity of this second Part. For
instead

instead of being, as he plainly meant it, merely a *Rational* Vindication of the Catholic Faith, respecting the Trinity and the Divinity of our Lord, it now assumes another Form, and rather appears as a *Scriptural* Vindication of these Doctrines. The *other* was, I knew my Inability to treat the Subject in his masterly Manner, and that at best it would seem a very heterogeneous Composition. I concluded therefore to let these Letters go abroad in their unfinished State, as the imperfect and posthumous Works of a great and good Man, who hardly ever dropt a Word from his Lips, or a Sentence from his Pen, but what was, one Way or other, calculated to do Good.

What Dr. *Priestley* will think of these unfinished Letters, should he condescend to cast his Eye over them, is easy to see, after the Judgment he has passed upon the deservedly celebrated Writings of Dr. *Horsely*, now Lord Bishop of St. *David's*. "We consider, (says he, Page 1, of his last Letters to his Lordship) your Publications in this Controversy, "as
 "contributing, in an eminent Manner, to the
 "Propagation of that great Truth, for which
 "we think it glorious to contend, and which
 "you oppose." And again, P. 2, "Had I been
 "permitted to chuse my own Antagonist, by
 "exposing of whose Arguments and Manner
 "of conducting the Controversy, I might avail
 "myself the most, I should certainly have made
 "Choice of your Lordship. After seeing your
 "first Set of Letters to me, I said to several
 "of my Friends, that if I could have dictated
 "the Whole of your Performance myself, it
 "should

“ should have been just what I found it to be;
 “ your Arguments were so extremely futile;
 “ and your Manner of urging them giving me
 “ even more Advantage than I wanted or wished
 “ for.” If even the Arguments of Dr. *Horsely*,
 the Force of which has been felt and acknow-
 ledged so universally, have made no Impression
 upon the Mind of the Doctor, what can be
 expected from these confessedly inferiour Publi-
 cations? Surely, should he condescend to honour
them with his Notice (a Favour, which however
 is not expected) in one Half-hour he might
 demonstrate their Futility, and were not the
 Antagonist of too little Note to afford the
 Doctor much Honour in the Conquest, we might
 again hear him proclaiming his Victory in Terms
 similar to those he uses when (P. 4) he assures
 his Lordship in great Triumph, that “ he (the
 “ Bishop) has been completely foiled in all his
 “ Attempts to discover any Error (in the Doctor’s
 “ Writings) of the least Consequence to his
 “ main Argument.” And many, no Doubt,
 would take the Doctor’s Word for it, and save
 themselves the Expence of purchasing and
 Trouble of reading a Book, the Author of
 which had been so “ completely foiled,” in the
 Whole of his Argumentation. It will remain
 a Truth, however, when Dr. *Priestley* and his
 Publications are no more, that *not he that com-
 mendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord
 commendeth.*

As to the *Scriptures*, Arguments drawn from
 that Source, can have but little Weight with
 the Doctor. “ You think it extraordinary (says
 “ he to the Rev. *James Barnard*, P. 83) that I
 “ should

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“ should have Recourse to such Guides as the
 “ Fathers to settle my Opinion concerning the
 “ Doctrine of the Trinity, thinking, I suppose,
 “ that the Study of the Scriptures might render
 “ all other Helps unnecessary. Now I have more
 “ than once given my Reasons for this Conduct.
 “ It is in short this. Christians are not agreed
 “ in the Interpretation of Scripture Language;
 “ but as all Men are agreed with respect to the
 “ Nature of *Historical Evidence*, I thought that
 “ we might perhaps better determine by History,
 “ what was the Faith of Christians in early
 “ Times, independantly of any Aid from the
 “ Scriptures; and it appeared to be no unna-
 “ tural Presumption, that whatever that should
 “ appear to be, such was the Doctrine of the
 “ Apostles, from whom their Faith was derived;
 “ and that by this Means we should be possessed
 “ of a pretty good Guide for discovering the
 “ true Sense of Scripture.”

It appears therefore that, in the Doctor's Opi-
 nion, though the Apostles exhort us to *strive toge-*
ther for the Faith of the Gospel, and to *contend*
earnestly for the Faith once delivered to the Saints;
 and though they wrote many Epistles designedly
 to tell us what that Faith was; yet that these Epis-
 tles are so *unintelligible*, that if we wish for in-
 formation concerning this Faith, we must not
 have Recourse to *them*, though written in a Lan-
 guage perfectly understood, but to the Histories
 and other Writings of Persons who lived some
 Centuries after. According to this Hypothesis;
 if some Ages hence any one should be wishful
 to know what the Faith of that great *Philosopher*
 and *Divine* Dr. Priestley was, he must not ap-
 ply

ply to the Doctor's own Writings for Information, though those Writings should happen to be extant and should be preserved entire, but must recur to *Histories of England, Memoirs of the Lives and Writings of eminent Men*, and other Books composed and published some Ages after the Doctor's Death, and by Men, perhaps, either ill-informed on the one Hand, or prejudiced on the other! According to the same Plan the Faith of the old *Puritans* might be learned from the Books of the present *Presbyterians*, that is the *Socinians*, their Successors, and the Faith of our *Reformers* from the Sermons and other Publications of the present Clergy of the Church of *England*! On the same Principle too, it may be learned from some future *Socinian* Historian, how the Bishop of *St. David's* managed the Controversy with *Dr. Priestley*, and how *just* and *Scriptural* his Lordship's Sentiments were on the important Subject debated between them!

I would not be understood as insinuating here, either that the ancient Fathers of the Church or the Members of it, in general, in the first Ages, departed from the Faith, held by the Apostles and first Christians. I am persuaded they did not; and that their holding the Doctrine contended for in these Sheets is capable of as clear and satisfactory Proof as any Subject of History whatever. But be this as it will, it appears to me that any Man's Faith is best learned from those Discourses and Writings of *his own* in which he *professedly* declares that Faith, unless, indeed, on the one Hand there be Reason to question his *Sincerity*, or on the other to suppose him

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him deficient in *Common Sense*, or at least in Ability to make himself understood. Accordingly, I think, without intending to detract at all from the Character or Writings of those holy and eminent Men, the ancient Fathers, that the Faith of the Apostles, is best learned from what they themselves have delivered concerning it. And Dr. *Priestley* may use what Arguments he pleases, I am satisfied he never will be able to convince any of the contrary, but those whom he has first persuaded that these sacred Penmen were deficient in *Integrity* or in *Understanding*; that they either *would not* or *could not*, give a just and intelligible Account of their Sentiments.

The Doctor has already carried his Researches very far, not only in *Philosophy*, but also in *Divinity*: He has greatly outstripped all his Predecessors. In *Philosophy* he has discovered, to the utter Confusion of the Wisdom of former Ages, that Man has no *Soul*, no *rational* and *immortal Spirit*; that he is a mere Piece of organized Matter, and that of Consequence all his Motions are purely mechanical, all his Tempers, Words and Works, previously *fixed, necessary* and *unavoidable*; a Doctrine this published to the World some years ago, and still openly avowed, as appears by his late Letters to the Reverend *John Hawkins*; in which he declares himself to be "professedly an *Unitarian*, a *Necessarian*, and a *Materialist*." In *Divinity* he has not only adopted and confirmed the Discoveries (or *Tenets*, as I should rather call them) of *Socinus*, respecting the mere Humanity of Christ, with all the Train of Consequences which that Doctrine draws after it; but he questions the Authenticity

of

of the Account, given in the beginning of the Gospels of St. *Matthew*, and St. *Luke*, respecting the miraculous Conception of the Child Jesus. Of Course he has inferred that Jesus Christ, sent indeed of GOD and a great Prophet, yet was *weak, fallible and peccable*, like other Men; that as to the *Evangelists* and *Apostles*, whatever might be the Case with them as *Speakers*, concerning which I think he has not pronounced positively, yet that as *Writers*, they certainly were not inspired; that as to St. *Paul*, in particular, he often Reasons very inconclusively and both misunderstands and misapplies sundry Passages quoted from the Old Testament.

But, it will be impossible for the Doctor to stop here. He must of Necessity either advance further or come quite back.—As to *Philosophy*, indeed, the Philosophy, I mean, that concerns the nature of Man, he seems to be arrived at the *Ne plus Ultra*. It being a plain, undeniable Fact that we do *move*, it would be in vain to endeavour to persuade us that we do not. All that can possibly be done in this Case is, what he has effected long ago, that is, to prove, that we move *mechanically*. But in *Divinity*;—unless, as I hinted, he should think proper to make a Retreat and return into the Paths of Orthodoxy, which at his Time of Life, and after the Attention and Admiration he has excited for a Number of Years by the Singularity of his Discoveries, he is well aware he could not do with Credit to himself;—in Divinity (I say) he will be under a Necessity of going much further. Added to what he has demonstrated respecting St. *Paul's* reasoning *inconclusively*, and all the Apostles and Evangelists writing

ing without *Inspiration*, he must make it evident that they all in general, and *St. Paul*, in particular, wrote without *Common Sense*. This, on the one Hand, would be going through with the Business, and would for ever free him and all other great and learned Philosophers and Divines, from what has long been found to be a prodigious Clog upon the Feet of those who are in Haste to make Discoveries, I mean that obsolete Book the *Bible*. And, on the other, it will be found absolutely necessary to gain Credit to the Discoveries already made, and especially to procure them a firm and lasting Establishment. And then neither the Doctor, nor any of his Brethren of the School of *Socinus*, need give themselves any further Trouble, in fruitless Endeavours to reconcile their Sentiments with the antiquated Doctrines taught by *St. Paul*, *St. John*, or any other of the New Testament Writers, any more than they would to reconcile them with the Reveries of a Mad-man, or the Dreams of an Enthusiast.

As a Specimen of what might be done in this Way, and because it is reasonable to think that the Doctor has not Time, in the Midst of his his many and severe Studies, and voluminous Publications, to search the Scriptures for the Examples which seem necessary to be produced, in Proof of so important a Point; I have taken the Pains to look over the New Testament, and especially the Epistles of *St. Paul*, and have put down many Instances of this Kind. I will not say they are all of them the most remarkable that could be found, but they are such as struck me most in the Perusal, and I here take the Liberty
of

of presenting them to the Public, along with these unfinished Letters of the Rev. Mr. *Fletcher*. Whether I shall have the Doctor's Thanks for this my forwardness to serve him, I know not, but, I can in Truth say, I mean his Good, as well as the Good of all into whose Hands these Sheets may fall, and what is well meant, he will allow, should be well taken. His Wisdom and Learning, I doubt not, will direct him as to the Use to be made of these Quotations from the Writings of the Evangelists and Apostles. They may properly be considered, (like *Experiments* in Natural Philosophy) as so many Instances, demonstrating in *Fact*, not only the Truth and certainty of his late Discovery, that the Persons who could write in such a Manner, could not be *divinely inspired*, but, as I said, that they could not have even *Common Sense*. The Way will then be perfectly open for all that remains, and he may make an easy Transition to *Deism*, *Atheism*, or what he pleases.

JOSEPH BENSON.

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Birmingham,

February 25, 1790.

LETTERS

L E T T E R S

TO THE

REV. DR. PRIESTLEY,

BY THE LATE

REV. JOHN FLETCHER, &c.

L E T T E R II.*

Doctor Priestley is mistaken, when he asserts that the Prophets always spoke of the Messiah as of a mere man like themselves, and that the Jews never expected that the Messiah could be more than a man. In opposition to this error, this Letter proves, that our first Parents expected a divine Messiah, and that the divine Person, who appeared to the Patriarchs and to Moses, was Jehovah the Son, or Christ in his pre-existent state.

REV. SIR,

YOU might have given us, at least, twenty lines of plain, uncontroverted truth in the beginning of your History, but regardless of so decent a caution, you stun us at once by a glaring, anti-christian paradox. In the sixteenth line of your huge Work (for we need not go by pages to reckon up your errors) speaking of the thoughts which

* See the first Letter in the first part.

which the Jews entertained of the *Messiah*, you say, *None of their Prophets gave them an idea of any other than a man like themselves in that illustrious character, and no other did they ever expect.*

Now Sir, in opposition to this strange Assertion, I shall shew you, not only that the Prophets gave the Jews an idea of a *divine person* to appear in the character of the *Messiah*, and that accordingly they expected such an one, but that even our first Parents must have formed a much higher notion of that *seed of the woman which was to bruise the Serpent's head* than that of 'a mere man *"like themselves"*. In proof of this, I shall not produce the expression of *Eve* upon the birth of *Cain*, whom it is highly probable she thought to be that *seed*, though according to the Hebrew it is *I have gotten the man, the Jehovah*. But I shall go upon surer grounds than any particular expression can afford. I shall argue from facts and from the reason of the case. However unwilling you may be to allow it, it is nevertheless, as we have already seen in the former part of this work, an unquestionable truth that the *Logos, the Word*, who was in the beginning with *GOD* and was *GOD*, was the immediate maker of our first Parents, of that beautiful world in which he placed them, and of all the creatures over which he set them, nay, and of all things visible and invisible. Now can we suppose that *Adam*, who, as he came out of the hands of his Maker, had such knowledge, that at first sight he gave names to all the creatures, as they passed in review before him, and names perfectly descriptive of their natures; can we suppose (I say,) that he did not know who was his Creator and the Creator of all these Creatures he had named? Certainly we cannot. But if he knew who was his Creator, he could hardly be ignorant who would be his Redeemer. For considering

dering the holy and happy state he and his partner had been in before their fall, the serenity of their minds, the vigour of their bodies and the beauty and fertility of the blissful spot where their bounteous Lord had placed them; and considering the sad change that had now taken place, the dreadful ruin they had brought on themselves and their posterity by their transgression; Considering their crime itself with its awful retinue, shame, the curse, sorrow, toil, death, and corruption; it was reasonable surely to think, that the repairer of the breach, the restorer of a ruined world, would be *that* divine Person, by whom it was created. Thus when we see an exquisite piece of mechanism caputally injured in all its parts, we reasonably conclude, that none can completely mend it, but the *Maker*, or an Artist who equals him in skill.

Nor was it unreasonable for our first Parents to think, that their Redeemer would be He, whom St. Paul calls *the Lord from heaven*: For, He who made and married them, who gave them the garden of Eden, and warned them not to eat of the forbidden fruit; He, who came to them *walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and from whose presence they hid themselves, when they heard his voice*; He, who, after he had convicted them, and had passed sentence of death upon them, so kindly stayed them from despair, by the unexpected Promise of a Deliverer; He who already carried his merciful condescension so far as to strip them of their fig-leaves, to make them coats of skins, and to clothe them with needful and decent apparel; He might, in some future period, condescend to unite himself, some how or other, to the woman's seed, and become the destroyer of Death and the Serpent.

The reasonableness of this hope is evident, if He taught our first Parents (as it is highly probable he did) to offer in sacrifice the *beasts, of whose skins He made them coats*, and thus already shewed himself *our Passover, the Lamb of God*, typically slain from the foundation of the world. Nor can we more reasonably account for the *original* notion and the *universal* custom of expiatory and propitiatory sacrifices, than by the supposition, that mankind were led to this part of divine worship by a peculiar revelation, or by a positive command of that divine Person, who familiarly conversed with Adam, and who is called God, or LORD GOD, twenty six times, in the second and third chapters of Genesis.

1. The same Scriptures, which inform us, that *No man hath seen God (the Father) at any time, but that the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, hath declared Him*, (John i. 18,) teach us nevertheless, that God appeared to several of the Patriarchs, and sometimes even in a human shape. Hence it follows, that we must either reject St. John's declaration above-quoted, or admit, that He, who thus appeared, is the Son, the Logos, who was in the beginning with God and was God.

The truth of this conclusion will appear more clearly, if we take a view of the *design* and *circumstances* of these ancient manifestations, these preparatory and transient incarnations (if I may so call them) OF THE WORD, who in a fixed period was to be really and lastingly manifested in the flesh.

Whether we consider his expostulating with Cain, about the murder of Abel, his trying and condemning that murderer, as he had done Adam, and his setting a mark upon the guilty vagabond, lest any finding him should kill him; or, whether we take notice of the manner, in which he directed

directed *Noah* to build his ark, made him enter into it, shut him in, saved him and his family from the flood, and then *speaking unto him, said, Go forth out of the ark, &c.*—Whether we advert to the friendly manner in which he *appeared to*, and conversed with *Abraham*, in his various stations and journies; or, whether we attend to the familiarity with which, accompanied by two of his Angels, he came to that Patriarch in a human shape, condescended to eat with that Friend of God, as he ate with *Simon*, and was worshipped and invoked by him, as THE JUDGE OF ALL the earth, who claimed the absolute right of sparing *Lot*, and destroying *Sodom*, as he had spared *Noah*, and destroyed the whole world by water; and who actually destroyed that wicked city by *rain- ing, as Jehovah, fire from Jehovah* upon it, when the two angels who accompanied him had made *Lot*, and his daughters escape out of that accursed town: Whether, I say, we consider these or any other of the Lord's appearances, He is represented as *Jehovah*, coming to do before hand the work of the Messiah.

As supreme Prophet, he leads *Abraham, Isaac*, and *Jacob*, opens the eyes of *Agar*, instructs *Moses* and all the Prophets, *Bazaleel* and all the ingenious artists. As supreme High Priest, he directs *Abraham* and *Aaron*, how to offer up proper sacrifices. As Lord of Hosts, or Captain of the Lord's hosts, he overthrows five kings before *Abraham*; *Pharaoh*, before *Moses*; the Kings of *Canaan* before *Joshua*, and the *Philistines* before *David*. As Angel of the Covenant, he strengthens, wrestles with, and blesses *Jacob*; he visits, directs and animates *Gideon*: He assumes a human shape to promise a son to *Abraham*, and to *Manoah*: And, as he said to the Jews, *Before Abraham was, I am*; so, speaking to *Moses*, from the burning,

unconsumed bush, which was an emblem of his eternal Power and Glory, he shews that, with his Father, he is *the First and the Last*; and declares their common name, *I am that I am*.

These manifestations of Jehovah's glory had circumstances characteristic of the Son's Person, as appears by the accounts handed down to us in the sacred writings. When *Moses, Aaron, and seventy two of the Elders of Israel went up, and saw the God of Israel*, it is said, *there was under his feet, as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness; And that upon these Nobles he laid not his hand*. He appeared therefore as a man, since he had feet and hands, which it cannot be shewn the Father ever did.

Accordingly the Apostle, speaking of the preference, which *Moses's* faith gave to the God of *Israel*, over the idols and riches of the *Egyptians*, says that *Moses esteemed the reproach of CHRIST greater riches than the treasures in Egypt*, Heb. xi. 26; the *Israelites* being then as much reproached by the *Egyptians* for worshipping the God of *Israel*, as we are by you, Sir, for worshipping the *Logos*. And St. Paul, alluding to these words of *Moses*, *The children of Israel tempted JEHOVAH, saying, Is JEHOVAH among us or not?* Exod. xvii. 7, says to the *Corinthians*, *Let us not tempt CHRIST, as some of them, (the children of Israel) also tempted, [him] and were destroyed of serpents*: 1 Cor. x. 9. Which shews the Apostle believed, that Jehovah Leader of *Israel* through the wilderness, was the very *Logos*, who sustained openly the office of Messiah, when he was at length manifested in human flesh.

And as the Scriptures shew, that these transient manifestations of Jehovah, are in general to be understood of Christ in his divine nature, or in his

his *form of God*, [see *Phil. ii. 6.*] your own *Reason*, Sir, prejudiced as it is, must see the propriety of this doctrine. For, if there be, in union with the Father's Godhead, a *Word*, a *Son*, whose goings out are from everlasting, who was in the beginning with God [the Father] and was God, in so much that he can say, as the only begotten Son of the Father, *I and my Father are one*, in a sense which can be true only with respect to him who is the proper Son, and the express image of the Father [see *Rom. viii. 32*, in the original, and *Heb. i. 3.*]—If there is, I say, such a Being, whom St. John calls the Logos, and whom the Father names his well beloved Son; and if the Scriptures testify, that the Father sent this Son to redeem mankind, and to bless all nations; is it not more reasonable to believe, that the Father occasionally sent him first to redeem the *Israelites* from their *Egyptian* captivity, and to bless that favoured people, than to believe that the Father, who never personally appeared, no not for the redemption of all mankind, appeared nevertheless some times as a man, and some times as an Angel for the redemption of the children of *Israel* from their house of bondage?

A Son, even the proper Son of God, may, with the greatest propriety, be sent by his Father, to do works worthy of Omnipotence, such as the redemption of a world, or the deliverance of a favourite people; But to suppose the Father personally to appear as a partial Saviour in a cloud, or in a flame, on a mountain, or in a temple, to suppose him to shew himself some times as an Angel, and sometimes as a Man, is contrary both to the analogy of faith, and to the dictates of reason.

Besides,

Besides, the Scriptures inform us, that by faith Moses endured as seeing Him, who is invisible, because He dwells in the light, which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: Heb. xi. 27, and 1 Tim. vi. 16: And they declare, that if the Father is visible, it is in his Son, John xiv. 9. From these rational and scriptural premises, I conclude, that Jehovah, who appeared to Moses, and to the seventy two elders, and who said to the People of Israel, *I am the Lord thy God, who brought thee out of the house of bondage*, is that express Image of the Father, that Prince of Life, who said, *He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father: I and the Father are one.*

The Reviewers* have proved to you, Sir, that this was the opinion of Justin, one of the most ancient and respectable Fathers, who had the honour of sealing the truth of the Gospel with his blood, 130 years after our Lord. And Bp. Bull confirms the proofs brought against you, where he writes, That the Son of God was he, who 'appeared to Moses in the Bush, and said, *I am the existent Being*; Justin, in his Dialogue with Trypho, 'eagerly contends. The case is this. That Description of God, in Moses, *I am*, equally agrees 'to the Father and the Son, as to one God; 'always saving the Distinction of Persons: Which 'is excellently explained by Justin, after this 'manner: God the Father is [*ο ων*] *the Existent*, 'as always existing of himself; God the Son is '[*ο ων*] *the Existent*, as existing with the Father, 'and eternally begotten of him.' [Bull by Grabe, vol. i, p. 347. Meaning

* Monthly Review for January 1784, p. 61. "To prove (say these Gentlemen) beyond the possibility of dispute or evasion, that by the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Justin meant Christ, we refer the reader to his celebrated Apology to the Emperor Antoninus Pius, (p. 93, 94) in which this expression is not only applied to Christ, but even vindicated as his own appropriate and distinct character."

Meaning to resume the important subject the first opportunity, I now release you, and subscribe myself,

Your sincere friend,
And obedient servant, in the
Word made flesh,

JOHN FLETCHER.

LETTER III

The Subject of the former Letter continued.

REV. SIR,

SHOULD you deny that JEHOVAH, who appeared to Abraham in the plains of Mamre, accompanied by two angels, was the Logos, we prove our assertion thus. The Scriptures nowhere speak of any transient incarnation of the Father; it is therefore unscriptural to suppose, that the Person who did eat of the butter, milk, and cakes which Abraham did set before him, and who kindly enquired after Sarah, was THE FATHER. Nevertheless that he was God is evident, for he is called eight times JEHOVAH in the context. And therefore, the analogy of faith requires us to believe that it was Jehovah the Son, who already condescended to quit his form of God, and to appear in the form of a servant, that he might receive sinners and eat with them: Compare Gen. xviii. 8. with Luke xv. 2. and John xxi. 12.

The same reasons prove that the divine Person, who stood above the mysterious ladder which Jacob saw in Bethel, was Jehovah the Son. Behold, saith the Historian, JEHOVAH stood above it, and said,

said, *I am Jehovah the God of Abraham thy Father, and the God of Isaac, behold I am with thee in all places whither thou goest, and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.* And Jacob waking out of his sleep said, surely *JEHOVAH* is in this place, and I knew it not: It is none other but the house of God, and the Gate of Heaven. Gen. xxviii. 13,—17. Now the God, who appeared to Abraham, Gen. xxii. 1, to Isaac, Gen. xxvi. 24. to Jacob, Gen. xxviii. 13.—and to Moses, Exodus iii. 6. is again and again called the Angel of Jehovah or rather Jehovah the Angel, as appears from Gen. xxii. 11, 12, 18. Exodus iii. 2. and Mal. iii. 1. Now that this Jehovah, Angel both of the Jewish and of the Christian covenant, is the Son, appears from these three reasons. (1) The Father never sustained the part of an Angel, a Messenger, or an Envoy. Who should send him? (2) The Son, who can with propriety be sent by the Father, is frequently said to have been delegated on errands worthy of redeeming love. And (3) The Scriptures expressly declare, that Jehovah Angel of the Covenant, is our Lord Jesus Christ, Compare Mal. iii. 1, &c. with Mark, i. 1, &c.

Nor will it avail to say that the Jews, not having the New Testament, could not find out the truth I assert, for as has been observed in the former part, the Old Testament, clearly indicates, that, in the Deity, there is a mysterious distinction of Interlocutors and Agents, though without any division. The Jews who (as we have seen) had this key given them at the very beginning of their revelation could not but take notice that although each of these Interlocutors is called *Jehovah*, yet one of them is Jehovah the Envoy, the Ambassador or the Angel. And they might as well deny the veracity of Moses as deny that Jehovah who appeared to Jacob in Bethel is Jehovah the Envoy.

For

For Jacob said to Rachel and Leah, the *Angel of God* appeared to me in a dream, saying, I am **THE GOD OF BETHEL**, where thou anointedst the pillar, and where thou vowedst a vow unto me : Now arise, get thee out from this land. *Gen. xxxi. 11, 13.* Now the God of Bethel, declared to Jacob in Bethel that he was the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and therefore every attentive Jew could not but see that Jehovah Envoy, or the *Angel of the Jewish Covenant* was the God of the Patriarchs, viz. the Logos, the Son, who, being Jehovah, rained from Jehovah fire upon Sodom, after he had told Abraham that he could not spare that wicked city.

Christ is represented in the new Testament as the Captain of our salvation, armed with a sword : *Heb. ii. 10. and Rev. xix. 15.* And the old Testament exhibits Jehovah-Envoy as sustaining the same character. When Joshua was by Jericho, he lift up his eyes, and behold, there stood a man over against him, with his sword drawn in his hand : and Joshua went to him, and said, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries ? And he said, Nay, but as Captain of the host of the Lord am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my Lord unto his servant ? And the Captain of the Lord's host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot, for the place whereon thou standest is holy. [The very charge which the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob gave to Moses from the flaming bush in Horeb.] And when Joshua had obeyed, the man, who appeared as Captain of the Lord's host, gave him directions about the taking of Jericho, as the God of Abraham had given directions to Moses about the delivering his people from their Egyptian bondage. These orders are thus expressed : And Jehovah said unto Joshua, see, I have given into thy hands Jericho :

Ye

Ye shall compass the city six days, &c. Josh. v. 13, &c. and vi. 2, &c.

Unless we absurdly suppose, that the Captain of the Lord's host appeared merely to bid *Joshua* loose his shoes from off his feet, it follows from this narration, that the personage who appeared to *Moses*' successor, was *Jehovah* God of *Abraham*. This is evident, (1) From his being called *Jehovah*, and (2) From his requiring and accepting religious worship from *Joshua*. And that it was *Jehovah* the Son, is equally plain, (1) From his assuming the form of a servant; (2) From his styling himself the Captain of *Jehovah*'s armies; for according to the analogy of faith, the Son, *Jehovah*-Envoy, may be called the Captain of his Father's host, but the Father can never be sent on an expedition, as Captain of his Son's armies.

That *Jehovah*-Envoy, so frequently styled the Envoy of *Jehovah*, or as we have it in our translation the Angel of the Lord, was known to the Jews as the *Mighty God*, whose name is wonderful, appears from the following account:—*The Angel of the Lord appeared to Gideon, and said Jehovah is with thee,—and Jehovah looked upon him and said, Go in this thy might, [the might which I impart unto thee,] and thou shalt save Israel: have I not sent thee? And when Gideon drew back, Jehovah [namely the Angel Jehovah] said unto him, Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man.* Hence the *Israelites*, when they fell upon the *Midianites* shouted, *The sword of Jehovah, and of Gideon.* When *Jehovah*-Envoy, who appeared only as a traveller, with a staff in his hand, disappeared, after giving a proof of his divinity, by shewing he was God that answereth by fire, [see *Judges* vi. 21.] *Gideon* perceived the infinite dignity of the Personage who had spoken to him, and remembering that *Jehovah* had said to

Moses,

Moses, *No Man shall see me [in my form of God] and live, Exod. xxxiii. 20;* and thinking he was to die immediately, cried out, *Alas! O Lord God: for because I have seen the Angel of the Lord face to face: And Jehovah (as he disappeared) said unto him, Peace be unto thee, fear not, thou shalt not die; And Gideon built an altar there unto Jehovah, and called it JEHOVAH SHALOM, [that is, The God of peace.]* From this account it is evident: (1) That the Angel, who appeared to Gideon, is the very Angel Jehovah, who appeared to Abraham on mount Moriah, to Jacob in Bethel, and to Moses in Horeb. (2) That he is Jehovah, who answers by fire, seeing he manifested his glory to Gideon as he did to Moses and Elijah, by a supernatural fire. (3) And that as the analogy of faith does not permit us to believe that God the Father ever appeared as a man with a staff in his hand, it was without doubt Jehovah Jesus, who as the great Saviour of the *Israelites*, appointed Saviour's for the deliverance of his people, and Gideon among others, as afterwards in the days of his flesh, as the great Apostle of our profession, he appointed twelve Apostles to instruct mankind.

This doctrine is confirmed by the account we have of the manner in which Samson was raised to the Office of a temporal Saviour of the *Israelites*. A Personage who is called several times the Angel of the Lord, or the Envoy-Jehovah, appeared as a man to Manoah and his wife, to whom he promised the birth of Sampson: Manoah, not knowing his dignity, asked him his name. And the Angel of the Lord said unto him, Why askest thou thus after my name, seeing it is secret, or wonderful [PELI; the very word afterwards used by the Prophet, who saith, His Name shall be called wonderful, PELI: *Isaiah ix. 6.*] So Manoah took a kid, with a meat offering, and offered

it upon a rock unto Jehovah; and the Angel of the Lord [or Jehovah-Envoy] did wonderfully, for shewing himself the God that appeared in the burning-bush to Moses, and accepting the propitiatory sacrifice, which Manoah and his wife offered] he ascended in the flame of the altar, as they looked on and fell on their faces to the ground. Then Manoah knew that he was Jehovah-Envoy, or the Angel of the Lord; and he said unto his wife, We shall surely die, because we have seen God: But his wife [perceiving that it was Jehovah-Shalom, the God of Gideon, the God of peace who had appeared unto them] said to him; If Jehovah were pleased to kill us, he would never have received a burnt-offering at our hands. Judg. xiii. 23.

The same reasons which prove, that the Person who appeared to Gideon is Jehovah Jesus, prove also that the Person who appeared to Manoah and his wife, whom they at first called a man, and before whom they trembled, when they knew him to be God and Jehovah, is that very Immanuel, that God manifested in the flesh, whom Christians worship as Jehovah Shalom, coming to make peace and reconciliation.

* * * * *

LETTER

LETTER IV.

The foundation of the Proofs of Christ's Divinity from the Writings of the Prophets, is laid in the three original Prophecies recorded by Moses, concerning the Messiah.

REV. SIR,

IN the two last letters I have endeavoured to shew, both from Scripture and Reason, that the Israelites could reasonably expect a divine Messiah, and that it is most unreasonable and unscriptural to suppose, that, whereas the Son appeared on mount Calvary for the redemption of all mankind from the tyranny of Sin, Death, and Satan; God the Father appeared on mount Horeb merely to redeem one single Nation from the tyranny of Pharaoh. Coming now to the point, I shall confront your first fundamental Proposition with the Prophecies of the old Testament. Speaking of the Messiah as a MERE MAN, and repeating in your *Disquisitions on Matter and Spirit*, what I have already quoted from the beginning of your *History of the Corruptions of christianity* you write [page 311] *Nor can it be said, that any of the ancient Prophecies give us the least hint of any thing farther.*

In direct opposition to this doctrine, I shall shew, that * all the prophetic Books of the old Testament contain, strong hints; or express declarations of the Messiah's Divinity; and I enter upon this task the more willingly, as I hope to present you with some new observations on this important subject.

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* Had it pleased the Lord to spare Mr. Fletcher, he had purposed to do this.

The oldest Book is *Genesis* : Moses, the Writer of it, is the first *Prophet* of the Jews, the oldest people in the world. And in that Book we find the three original Promises relative to the Messiah. The *first* was made immediately after the fall in these words; *I will put enmity between thee* (O Serpent) *and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed : It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel :* Gen. iii. 15. As if the Lord had said to the Tempter, ‘ By the instrumentality of a
‘ serpent thou hast triumphed over the woman,
‘ and by her over the man, but the day is not lost :
‘ A long and dreadful war shall be waged between thee and my Church, the spiritual Mother of all living souls, the mystical woman of whom Eve is a type : And another Eve shall
‘ one day bear a Son, the second and better Adam, whom I call *the seed of the woman*, because
‘ he shall be miraculously formed of the substance of a woman without the interposition of a man, as Eve was miraculously formed of the substance of Adam without the interposition of a woman. Armed with divine power he shall
‘ enter the field against thee, and thy forces. By the help of the wicked, who are thy *seed*, thou
‘ shalt indeed bruise his heel, wound to death the inferior part of his wonderful person, the body
‘ which he shall assume from his mother, and by which he shall be allied to the earth. But his deadly wound shall be fatal to thee ; for, shewing himself the Prince of life, even with his
‘ bruised heel *he shall bruise thy head*, he shall destroy thee and thy seed. Then shall the woman
‘ and her seed possess the gates of their enemies : then shall the curse brought upon the earth by the first Adam, be turned into a blessing by the second ; and the World redeemed, instead of being full of cruel habitations, shall become
like

‘like this forfeited garden.’ That this is a just exposition of this first Prophecy appears both from what is already come to pass, and from other predictions descriptive of the events foretold to the mystical Serpent.

And do not say, Sir, that this Paraphrase makes too much of Christ; for if *the Son of God was manifested to destroy the works of the Devil*, (1 John iii. 8.) is it not evident, that none can turn *thorns and thistles* into paradifical shrubs, anguish into bliss, death into life, and the general *Curse* into an universal *Blessing*, but he who said at first, *Let there be light, and there was light*; and who, when he first acted the part of a righteous Judge, thundered these words in the ears of guilty man, *Curst is the ground for thy sake, thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee: Dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return?* For supposing the Sun, by withholding his quickening beams, had caused a general winter and an universal night; is it not plain that the only remedy adequate to the greatness of such an evil, would be the return of the solar light?

The second original Promise respecting the Messiah, was made to *Abraham*, when he dwelt in *Haran*, and confirmed upon innocent *Moriah*, on an occasion, which reflects a great light on the Sufferings, Character and work of the Messiah. *By myself have I sworn saith the Lord [who can swear by no higher Being than himself] because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy Son, thine only Son; that in blessing I will bless thee:—Thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all the Nations of the earth be blessed: Gen. xxii. 16, &c.* St. Paul, alluding to this promise, saith, *Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:*

that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles, through Jesus Christ.—For, to Abraham and his seed, were the Promises [of an universal blessing] made: He (God) saith not, and to Seeds, as [if this blessing were to be the desert] of many [of Abraham's children] But as of one, ONE [of them] And to thy SEED, which is CHRIST: Gal. iii. 13, 16.

Being enlightened by this, and other parallel Scriptures, we clearly see, that the sense of this Promise is as follows: 'O thou, Father of the faithful, Heaven is pleased with thy steady obedience: Thou hast exemplified the holy Purpose of God the Father, who will not spare his Son, his only-begotten Son; but will deliver him up as a divine sacrifice for a guilty world: And Isaac hath shadowed out the meek obedience of the Son of God, that heavenly Lamb, which God will provide, that wonderful Descendant of thine, who shall be so superior to all his brethren, as eminently to deserve the name of the Son of God, according to his outgoing from everlasting, and the name of thy Seed, according to the human nature, which he shall assume from thee, by a virgin of thine offspring. 'Tis He, whom I peculiarly mean by thy Seed. He shall be thine Isaac, thy laughter and thy joy: By faith, see his day and be glad: (John viii. 56.) Rejoice in him evermore, for he shall be the desire of all nations, and the joy of the whole earth: for through him shall all the families and people be filled with righteousness, peace, and joy; when he shall possess the gate of his enemies, and cause righteousness to cover the earth, as the mighty waters cover the bottom of the sea?

The third Prophecy relative to the Messiah was uttered by dying Jacob. Gather yourselves together, said

said he to his Sons, that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the last days.—*Judah*, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise: Thy father's children shall bow down before thee. *Judah* is a lion's whelp, he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion: Who shall rouse him up? The sceptre shall not depart from *Judah*, nor a Lawgiver from between his feet, until *Shiloh* come, and unto Him shall be the gathering of the nations. Gen. ixl. 8, 10.

This ancient Prophecy, explained according to the parallel Scriptures, amounts to the following Prediction: '*Judah*, my Son, as the Lion is King among the Beasts of the Forest, so shall thy Tribe be the most honourable, powerful, and and warlike in *Israel*. But thy greatest honour shall arise from *David*, one of thy Descendants, and from the line of Kings, who shall spring up from his loins: For they, together with the Levites and Priests, who shall adhere to them, shall continue to give Princes and Rulers to the *Israelites*, till the *Shiloh* shall come, who shall sustain four most important offices. (1) Being typified by *Moses* and *Aaron*, two of *Levi's* grand-children, he shall be a meek Lawgiver, a powerful Prophet, and a majestic High Priest: (2) Being represented by *David*, an invincible captain, and a victorious Prince, whose Offspring he shall be, he shall subdue or destroy all his enemies, and shall deserve the titles of *Lion of the tribe of Judah*, and *Captain of our Salvation*: And (3) Being shadowed out of by *Solomon*, another of his ancestors, a peaceful and prosperous King, who by his wisdom and power shall secure the admiration and respect of all the *East*, he shall shew himself the *Shiloh*, the mighty Redeemer, promised to our Fathers; for he shall redeem *Israel* from all his sins, and from all his troubles.

troubles. Nor will he confine his royal benefits
 to our posterity: For when he shall have
 finished his work, as Lawgiver and Prophet,
 when he shall have been persecuted by his bre-
 thren as *Abel*; when he shall have been offered for
 us; and restored back to us as *Isaac*, his law shall
 be preached to distant nations, and he shall long
 remain as a *couching Lion*: But he shall at last
 be roused up by the groans of his oppressed
 people, and by the crying sins of all mankind.
 Then shall his hand be on the neck of his enemies:
 then shall he do his strange work, as the lion of
Judah's tribe: But soon coming up from the
 slaughter, as *Abraham*, from the defeat of the
 five kings, he shall shew himself, not only the
 promised Bruiser of the Serpent's seed, but the
 Prince of peace, both for our posterity and for
 all mankind; for all the families of the earth shall
 be blessed through him, and unto him shall the
 gathering of the nations be; the fulness of the
 Gentiles coming in, after the Jews, to enjoy the
 blessings of his holy, peaceful, and prosperous
 reign. And then shall be fulfilled another
 Prophecy: His righteous dominion shall be from
 sea to sea, and from the river, to the ends of the
 earth. I say his righteous dominion, for when
 the kingdoms of this world shall become the happy
 provinces of his kingdom, righteousness shall
 cover the earth: The whole earth shall be filled
 with his glory, and all his subjects shall sing,
 Blessed be [Immanuel] the Lord God, the God of
 Israel, who only doth wondrous things; and
 blessed be his glorious name for ever! Amen, and
 Amen! Psalm lxxii. 8, 20.

You will see, Sir, that this sense of *Jacob's*
 prophecy is confirmed by the prophecies of the
 other men of God; all the other oracles respecting
 the same subject, being only confirmations and
 explanations of the three original Promises handed

to us by *Moses*. He hath so clearly described the Messiah, by the divine works appointed for him, that to prove Christ's Divinity, by the concurrent testimony of all the Prophets, I need only prove that they unanimously declare, that the wonderful Person, who shall reverse the curse, bruise the Serpent's head, destroy the wicked, possess the gate of his enemies, unto whom all people shall be gathered, and in whom all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, is a Person truly divine, even Jehovah the Son or Immanuel, God manifest in the flesh to be both the King of the Jews, the Saviour of the world, and the King of the Princes of the earth.

OBJECTION. You will probably say, Sir, that *Moses* himself overturns the sense, which I put upon the three original Promises recorded by him, with respect to the Messiah; and that when *Moses* foretels Christ's coming, he only speaks of him as of a Prophet, like unto himself; and that if Christ were a Prophet like unto *Moses*, so sure as *Moses* was a man only, the Messiah was a mere man.

ANSWER. We grant that Christ, as Son of Man, is like *Moses*, in several respects. Was the son of *Amram* saved in his infancy from the cruelty of a jealous tyrant, who had doomed him to die with a multitude of other children? So was the Son of *Mary*. Was *Moses* the Lawgiver of the Jews? So is Christ the Legislator of the Christians. Was *Moses* remarkable for his meekness? So was he who says, *Learn of me, for I am meek in heart*. Both being appointed as mediating Prophets, stood in the gap to turn away the wrath of heaven from a guilty people. Both as Shepherds of the Lord, led his straying sheep through a wilderness, to a delightful land. Did *Moses* smite *Pharaoh*, King of *Egypt*; *Og*, King of the *Amorites*; and *Sehon*, King of *Basan*? So will Christ

Christ wound Kings in the day of his wrath. Did Moses heal the dying *Israelites*, by lifting up the Serpent in the wilderness? So Christ heals believers, by being lifted up on the cross. Did Moses fast forty days, and receive the law on Mount Sinai? So did Jesus fast forty days, and deliver his law on a Mountain of Galilee. Was Moses rejected, and almost stoned by the *Israelites*; so was Christ, by the Jews. Did Moses despise the glory of *Egypt*, that he might suffer for, and with the people of God? So did our Lord despise all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, that he might suffer for, and with his people. In a word, Is Moses the great Prophet of the *Old Testament*? So is Christ of the *New*. This was ground sufficient for the comparison, which Moses made of Christ with himself.

But, to conclude that because Christ, according to his human nature, was a Prophet, like unto Moses, he must be a mere man as Moses, is illogical. Dying *Jacob*, to express the toil, strength, and patience of *Issachar's* tribe; says, *Issachar* is (like) a strong ass, couching down between two burdens: but must we infer from thence, that *Issachar* had long ears, and really carried two panniers as an ass? It is by such injudicious pressing of comparisons, that monstrous doctrines are obtruded upon Christians, and that while some turn Socinians, others become even Materialists.

But although the Scriptures shew there is proper ground for a comparison between Christ and Moses, they take care to keep us from the rock against which you split; for they not only tell us that Christ is anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows, but that he is the chiefest among ten thousand Prophets, Priests, and Kings; because their divers offices join all in his divine Person.

Person. When the *Israelites* were in the Desert, God was their King, *Moses* their Prophet, *Aaron* their Priest, and *Joshua* their General; but Christ sustains alone all their parts.

I have shewn (in Let. ii.) that under the Law, the Logos or God, manifest some times in flames of fire, and some times in a human form, was the King of *Israel*, and *Moses* was his Prime Minister: a leading truth this, which *Nathanael* acknowledged, when discovering our Lord's glory, he cried out, *Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel*: John i. 49. As if he had said, Thou art He, whose patience our Father's tried in the desert, and whom they rejected in the days of *Samuel*, as appears by that Prophet's expostulation, *Ye said to me, Nay, but a King shall reign over us, when the Lord our God was your KING*: 1 Sam. xii. 12. But under the Gospel, when the Logos is continually manifested in the flesh, he sustains both characters; and, in that sense, may be compared to those great Monarchs, who, like *Frederic*, the late King of *Prussia*, are their own Prime Ministers.

Hence it is that, although as a Prophet, or a Minister, Christ is like *Moses*, yet as Logos, and King of *Israel*, he is infinitely superior to the Jewish Lawgiver. Consider *Jesus Christ*, says the Apostle; *He was counted worthy of more glory than Moses*, on two capital accounts: (1) *Moses* was faithful as a *Servant* in the house of him who had appointed him: But Christ was faithful as a *Son*, over his own house: (2) *Moses* was worthy of glory, in as much, as he was a fundamental stone in the house of God; but Christ is worthy of more glory, in as much as he who built the house, hath more honour than the house, or any part of it: For every house is built by some man; but he who hath built

built [the Jewish Church] and all things is God:
 Heb. iii. 1, 4. These words, with which I shall
 conclude this letter, are both a full answer to
 the Objection I consider, and a full proof of our
 Lord's Divinity.

I remain,

Dear Sir, &c.

LETTER

LETTER V.

All the Prophets bear witness to the Messiah as the bruiser of the Serpent and the prosperous king reigning in righteousness over the subject nations: In other words they foretel the days of vengeance and the days of refreshing which shall succeed them, under his administration.

TO open the Prophecies relative to the Messiah's glory, we must have a divine key. I have already shewn, that Moses gave it us, when he described the Redeemer as the Destroyer of the Serpent, and as the Shiloh, the prosperous King, who after having laid his hand on the neck of his enemies as a Lion, shall sway the Sceptre of his mercy over the submissive nations, or [to use the Prophet's laconic style] unto whom shall the gathering of the people be: Gen. xlix. 10.

The Messiah's achievements, in this two-fold point of view, were typified by the exploits of David and Solomon, the two first of his royal ancestors. David is long poor, despised by his brethren, and unknown to Israel. When he is anointed King of Israel, he is hated and pursued by a jealous and bloody Prince: But he kills the Giant who defied the armies of the living God, routs the Philistines, and after having acted the part of the Lion of the tribe of Judah, and given the Israelites victory on all sides, he leaves the crown to peaceful Solomon, unto whom is the gathering of the people, and who builds the magnificent temple of the Lord, and heaps upon Israel the blessings of a peaceful and prosperous reign.

St. Peter, in his second sermon, preaches the Messiah according to these two displays of his redeeming power. *It shall come to pass* (says he)

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that

that whosoever will not hear that (royal) Prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people. Repent ye therefore, that your sins may be blotted out, when the TIMES OF REFRESHING shall come from the presence of the Lord, and he shall send Jesus Christ who was before preached unto you (under the names of Wonderful, mighty God, Prince of peace, Immanuel, &c.) whom the heaven must receive, until the times of the restitution of all things, which God, since the world began, hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy Prophets.—For all the Prophets from Samuel (who anointed David the first royal type of the Messiah) as many as have spoken, have foretold these days (of vengeance, in which the Messiah will bruise the Serpent and his brood, and these days of refreshing, when the Lord Jesus, having destroyed those who would not have him reign over them, will give rest to his faithful subjects in all his dominions, which shall extend unto the ends of the earth. For adds St. Peter,) God said unto Abraham, And in thy Seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed: Acts iii. 19, 25.

As inattention and unbelief have cast a veil over this glorious part of the gospel, permit me, Sir, to remove a corner of this veil, and to shew how the Prophets have all spoken of the glorious days of the Messiah, and of the day of vengeance, which shall precede them. My dwelling on this point will not be a needless digression, but the very ground on which I shall rest, one of my strongest proofs of your error, and of Christ's Divinity. I now begin with Samuel, whom St. Peter particularly mentions.

Before I had found the key of scripture-knowledge, I own to you, Sir, that I wondered how that Apostle could say to the Jews, that Samuel had prophesied of Christ. I found no such prophecy in the books of Samuel. But now I see that
St.

St. Peter had in view the most glorious typical predictions concerning Christ, as our King, Prophet, and Priest.

I have proved that the *King of Israel*, who brought his people out of Egypt, was Christ in his pre-existent nature. *Moses* was the prime minister of this great King; *Joshuah*, the general of his armies; the Tabernacle, his Palace; the mercy seat, his throne; the ark, his royal standard: the Priests his officers; the Levites, his guards; and the Shekinah, the visible display of his presence. In the days of *Samuel*, whom he had chosen for his Prophet, Minister, and Representative, the Jews, tired of their invisible King, said to *Samuel*, *Make us a King, to judge us (personally and visibly) like all the nations. And Jehovah said unto Samuel, Harken to the People: They have not rejected thee, but they have rejected ME, that I should not reign over them. As they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt, so do they also unto thee.* 1 Sam. viii. 5. And when *Samuel* expostulated with them, he said your wickedness is great, which ye have done in the sight of the Lord, in asking you a King, when *Jehovah your God was your King*, and to back this reproof *Jehovah* sent such thunder and rain for a whole day in wheat-harvest, as made the rebellious Jews afraid of instant destruction, 1 Sam. xii. 12. 19. From this important passage we learn three things. (1) The King of Israel, who was rejected by the Jews in *Samuel's* days, is truly *Jehovah*, the very Lord of glory, whom the Jews rejected a second time, when, appearing in the form of a servant, he came to his own, and his own received him not, but crucified him with this remarkable title, *Jesus the King of the Jews*; the very title given him, both by the Wise-men, when they enquired after him that was born King of the Jews, and by the *Israelite* with-

out guile, when seeing the Form of God shining in Christ through the form of a servant, he confessed that Christ was *the Son of God, the King of Israel*: John i. 49.—(2) We see the ground of that *good confession, which our Lord made before Pontius Pilate*, when he declared himself both *the Son of God, and the King of the Jews*. Nor do I see how this confession could be true, if Christ, in his form of God, was not that very Jehovah Envoy, who spake to *Moses in Horeb*, and who, by indefectible right, was the King of the Jews and of the whole earth, even after his unruly subjects had rejected him. And that this was the true question in debate, is evident from these taunting words of the unbelieving Jews: *If he be THE KING OF ISRAEL, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe Him*: Matthew xxvii. 42. (3) If this is the truth for which our Lord (as faithful Witness and divine Martyr) thought it proper to lay down his life, does it not follow, that the doctrine of Christ's Divinity, or of his absolute right, as *Lord of glory*, to be the *King of the Jews and of the whole earth*, is the capital Doctrine of the old, as well as of the new Testament?

But, methinks you rise with indignation against this Inference. What becomes of the Glory of the Father, if the Son was the King of *Israel* in *Samuel's* time, and is still the King of the whole earth? But you need not fear that our Doctrine gives a wrong touch to the ark of the Father's monarchy; for as the Son, the *Lord of glory*, is the offensive King of the Church and of the whole earth, in and by whom the Father now governs the world: So there will come a time when the *Father of Glory* will himself be the offensive King, governing all the nations of men, whom the Son hath redeemed and brought into subjection, immediately in his own proper person, without the
Mediating

Mediating Ministry of the Son, the Son however still reigning in and with the Father. For says an Apostle, the Son *must reign till he hath put death, and all enemies under his feet.* And when the kingdoms of this world shall have been made worthy of the Father's peculiar acceptance; when Immanuel shall have put down all those earthly and infernal powers destructive of the perfect order, and compleat happiness of the universe, *then shall come the end of the Son's mediatorial Kingdom;* then shall the Son of God deliver up the Kingdom to God the Father, in whom nevertheless the Son and the Spirit will still have the dominion belonging to their divine rank: And thus, while the man Christ, still united to the Word, shall be the first subject of him, who put all things under him, God, (namely the Father, including the Word, and the Holy Ghost) will be all in all for ever. 1 Cor. xv. 24, &c. But I return to Samuel.

Although, in his time, the Jews incurred already the horrible guilt of rejecting the Lord of Glory from being their offensive King, they did not, they *could not* put an end to his supreme authority. The Theocracy, though impugned, was not destroyed. Jehovah, King of the Jews still exercised his Prerogative, in appointing worshipful Types of that divine Prophet, who was to declare and do the will of God better than Samuel, and of that divine Priest and King, on whom he would transfer the Shekinah, the divine Glory, which rested in the Tabernacle, when Jehovah filled it with adorable displays of his presence. Hence he continued Samuel as his Prophet, and by his means foretold, both by words and typical actions, the removal of all ungodly Priests, the destruction of all wicked Kings, and the appearance of Christ, the Man after his own heart, who should do all his pleasure, and of whose divine

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anointing that of *Aaron, David and Elisha*, was but a faint shadow.*

As *Job*, speaks of the *Messiah*, when he says, *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth*, *Job xix. 25.* So his afflictions were a type of the tribulation of the righteous, and his happy end was an emblem of the prosperity of the church in the day when our Lord shall stand on the mount of Olives, and GATHER HIS SAINTS, that they may see the vengeance, and wash their feet in the blood of the ungodly. *Psal. lviii. 10.*

DAVID in the beginning of the *xxii. Psalm*, describes the amazing sorrows of the *Messiah*, and the manner in which his heel was bruised, when his hands and his feet were pierced by the seed of the Serpent. And at the end of that Psalm, he declares that the gathering of the people shall be unto *Shiloh*: that the ends of the world shall remember themselves, and turn unto the Lord in his Son and all the kindreds of the earth shall worship before him, for (after the day of vengeance) the Kingdom shall be the Lord's and he shall be the Governour among the nations. Then shall the Meek inherit the earth, then shall they eat, worship, and be satisfied; enjoying without alloy the days of refreshing, which the Lord's presence will bring to those who shall have been faithful unto the end, whether they shall be of those dead Saints, who shall have a part in the first resurrection, which shall take place in the beginning of the days of refreshing; or whether they shall be among the Saints, who shall then be found alive.

ISAIAH

* Here there seems to be a chain in the Work.—Mr. Fletcher undoubtedly meant to have drawn more proofs or illustrations of his doctrine from the Historical Books before he came to the Poetical and Prophetical.

ISAIAH is full of this doctrine take one or two instances out of a hundred. You know, Sir, that in the language of the Prophets, as *Jacob* and the House of *Joseph* signify the Godly, so *Edom* and the House of *Esau* stand for the Wicked, the enemies of God's holy Church. *Isaiah* had a prophetic view of the Messiah, performing his strange work, his work of judgment, and travelling in the greatness of his strength, as Lion of the tribe of *Judah*, when he says, *Isai. lxi. 1, 6. Who is this that cometh from Edom, with died garments, from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, (Rev. xix. 12.) travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness (answers Shiloh,) mighty to save:—and I will tread (all the Edomites) in mine anger, and trample them in my fury, and my garments shall be sprinkled with their blood, for the day of vengeance is in my heart, and the year of my redeemed is come. In mine anger I will tread down the people (who obstinately trample my blood and my followers under foot.) I will make them drunk in my fury, and will bring their strength down to the ground. The Prophet, struck with awe, breaks out into a song of praise to the Lord for his great goodness towards the House of Israel, the Righteous: to whom the Lord condescends to give rest from those who turned the earth into cruel habitations, and who made the very Houses of God, dens of thieves, murderers, and hypocrites: ver. 7, 8. This song of thanksgiving and praise was echoed back by St. John, when he had a prophetic view of the Messiah coming in righteousness to judge and make war with all the antichristian Powers. Rev. xix. 1,—11.*

ISAIAH speaks next of the days of refreshing which shall follow those days of vengeance, which shall have such an effect upon the nations that they shall flock into the Church as pursued doves

doves to their windows. The Lord (says he to the Righteous) shall appear to your joy, and those who cast you out for my name's sake shall be ashamed. A voice of noise from the city! A voice from the temple! A voice of the Lord who rendereth recompense to his enemies! Now for the effect of these voices mixed with the sound of the gospel-trumpet: Before she (the new Jerusalem) travailed, she brought forth: before her pain came she was delivered. Shall the earth be made to bring forth in a day, or shall a Nation be born at once? Yes, saith the Lord. Shall I bring to the birth and not cause to bring forth? saith thy God. It is done! Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, ye that love her: Be glad with her, ye that mourned for her. Come, that ye may suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations: that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory. For thus saith the Lord, behold I extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles converted, like a flowing stream. Then shall ye suck; ye shall be borne on her sides and dandled on her knees: As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you, and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem: Your heart shall rejoice, and your bones shall flourish, when ye thus see the hand of the Lord towards his servants, and his indignation towards his enemies. *Isai. lxvi. 3, 14.* The dawn of this day of refreshing was seen in the earthly Jerusalem when three thousand and five thousand people entered at once into the new Jerusalem, the holy Church, the spiritual kingdom, which is righteousness, peace and joy, through the Holy Ghost, in whose comfort they walked, when great grace was upon them all.

ISAIAH points out these days of the Messiah in so many ways, that you will excuse me, Sir, if I copy one more of his striking pictures. Behold, says he, the Lord [Jehovah our Saviour] will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to
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render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire: For by fire, and by his sword, will the Lord plead with all flesh, and the slain of Jehovah shall be many. What follows is his last description, of the days of refreshing, which Jehovah Shiloh will usher in by the destruction of the wicked. It shall come to pass that (after those days of vengeance) I will gather all nations and tongues, and they shall come and see my glory. I will send my heralds, those that shall escape from the great tribulation, unto the nations and to the isles afar off, which have not heard my fame: and they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles. As the new heavens and the new earth, which I will then make, so shall your seed and your name remain. And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, shall all flesh come (by turns to my holy mountain Jerusalem) and shall worship before me, says the Lord: And they shall go forth (to the valley of Jehoshaphat) and look upon the carcases of the men that have transgressed against me, for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched, and they shall be an abhorrence of all flesh. Isaiah lxvi. 15, 24. Here ends Isaiah's account of that glorious reign of Jehovah Shiloh, which the Fathers called the Millennium, as being to last a thousand years, and during which it is probable, that our Lord will use these extraordinary means to keep all the nations in the way of obedience. (1) a constant display of his goodness over all the earth, but particularly in and about Jerusalem, where the Lord will manifest his glory, and bless his happy subjects with new Manifestations of his Presence every Lord's day and every new moon:—(2) A distinguishing interposition of Providence, which will withhold the Messiah's wonted blessings from the disobedient: For it shall be that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem (either in person or by their representatives)

representatives) to worship the King the Lord of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain. Zech. xiv. 17. (3) The constant endeavours of the Saints, Martyrs, Patriarchs, Prophets and Apostles, raised from the dead, and conversing with men as *Moses* and *Elijah* did with our Lord's Disciples upon the Mount, where they were indulged with a view of his glorified Person, and of his Kingdom come with power. These glorified high Priests and Kings, as Ministers and Lieutenants of the Messiah, will rule all churches and states with unerring wisdom and unwarped fidelity. (4) The care that the Lord himself will take to set apart for the ministry under his glorified Saints, those who in every nation shall distinguish themselves by their virtue and piety; this seems to be the meaning of his own words: *And when they shall come out of all nations to my holy mountain; I will take of them for Priests and Levites, saith the Lord,* speaking to the Prophet in the language of the Jewish Church. *Isaiah lxvi. 20, 21.* (5) A standing display of the ministration of condemnation, as appears from *Isaiah lxvi. 24.* above quoted, and from the following parallel Scriptures. At the time of the destruction of the *Assyrian*, the antichristian Powers, when the Lord shall cause his glorious voice of judgment to be heard, and shall shew the lightning down of his arm, with the flame of a devouring fire, with driving tempests and hail stones, and when in battles of shaking he will fight with his enemies, the fiercest of them will be cast into Tophet; whether they shall then be found alive, or whether they shall be of those whom our Lord will raise from the dead to a resurrection of condemnation: or as *Daniel* expresses it, to shame and everlasting contempt. *Dan. xii. 2.* Of those who shall be caught alive, *St. John* speaks, in these words, *I saw the Beast taken, and with him the false Prophet, who deceived them*

them that had received the mark of the Beast; and they were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. Rev. xix. 20. Their punishment is thus hinted at by *Isaiah*: *Tophet is ordained of old*, says he, *by the King* [who reigns in righteousness] *it is prepared*: or if we follow our translation, *it is prepared for the King*, the most furious of the antichristian Powers, called by St. *John* Antichrist, the Beast, the false Prophet, &c. The matter of it is fire and much fuel, and the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it: *Isai. xxx. 33. And the smoke rose up for ever and ever*, or during all the ages of the Messiah's Kingdom. Rev. xix. 3.

(6) At the same time that the ministration of condemnation will powerfully work upon the fears of mankind to keep men in the way of duty, an occasional display of the ministration of righteous mercy will work upon their hopes. How will those hopes be fired when they shall see the Lamb of God standing on the mount Sion, and with him his hundred and forty four thousand Worthies having his Father's Name [divine Majesty, irresistible Power, ineffable Love, and Bliss inexpressible] written on their foreheads? Rev. xiv.

But (7) what will peculiarly tend to keep men from relapsing into rebellion against God, will be the long life of the Godly, and the untimely death of those who shall offer to tread the paths of iniquity. The Godly shall attain to the years of the antediluvian Patriarchs and the wicked shall not live out half their days, they shall not live above an hundred years, or to speak after our manner, they shall die in their childhood. This seems to be *Isaiah's* meaning in the following description of the days of refreshing. *Behold, I create new heavens, and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered. But be you glad and rejoice for ever*

ever in that which I create : for behold I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people [to be nothing but a] joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem; and joy in my people, and the voice of weeping shall no more be heard in her: There shall be no more thence [a burial of] an infant of days, nor a godly old man that hath not filled his days : for the child shall die an hundred years old, but the sinner being an hundred years old, shall be accursed. And it shall come to pass that before they call I will answer, and while they are speaking I will hear. The very beasts of the field will partake of the happiness and glorious liberty of the Sons of God : For the Wolf and the Lamb shall feed together, and the Lion shall eat straw like the Bullock, and they shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord. *Isaiah lxxv. 17, 25.*

Having dwelt so long upon the account which the evangelical Prophet gives us of the day of vengeance, and of the days of refreshing, I shall dismiss this part of the subject by giving two or three short extracts from some of the remaining Prophets.

DANIEL fixes in the days of Messiah the Prince, the great tribulation, which shall come upon the ungodly, of which the destruction of Jerusalem was but an emblem; God's judgments beginning at his own house. And when the Messiah shall thus have sitten in judgment, and shall have consumed and destroyed the wicked, or bruised the Serpent's head in the person of antichrist and his adherents, the Kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, of Jehovah Shiloh, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom; and all dominions shall serve and obey him, [according to the decree recorded in *Psa. ii. 7.*] *Dan. vii. 26, 27.*

JOEL describes also, in the most lively manner, the work of the Messiah, both as He is the Lion of
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of the tribe of *Judah*, and the peaceful *Shiloh*, to whom the gathering of the people shall be. Speaking of our Lord under the first of these characters, he says, *In those days when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah : I will also gather all nations and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat,** [the valley of judgment] and I will plead with them there for my people, whom they have scattered. Assemble yourselves, and come all ye heathen. Come up to the valley of *Jehoshaphat* : for there will I sit to judge all the heathen [saith the Son, the mighty God, to whom all judgment is committed, as he is Son of man.] Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe, the press is full, the fats overflow, the wickedness of the earth is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision : for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision. The Lord also shall roar out of *Zion*, and utter his voice from *Jerusalem*, and the heavens and the earth shall shake : For, as the Apostle expresses it, in speaking of our Lord, He hath promised, saying, *Yet once more, I shake not the earth only, but also heaven.* Heb. xii. 36. Joel iii. 1, 2, 11, 16.

As *Joel* hath thus described the Messiah as Son of *David*, shaking and destroying his adversaries the wicked, so he represents him also as Son of *Solomon* procuring days of peace and prosperity to the *Israel* of God. Be glad ye children of *Zion*, and rejoice in the Lord your God, for the Lord will do great things for you. Fear not, for whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered ; for in mount *Zion* and in *Jerusalem* shall be deliverance. *Egypt* shall be a desolation ; and *Edom* shall be a desolate wilderness, for their violence against *Judah* : But *Judah* shall dwell for ever, and [the new] *Jerusalem* from generation to generation : For I will cleanse
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* The word *Jehoshaphat* means, God is the Judge, or the Judgment of God.

their blood which I have not cleansed, for the LORD [Jehovah Shiloh] dwelleth in Zion. And the Prophet describes the means of this cleansing, in this noted Promise, I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your Sons and your daughters shall prophecy, &c. A capital promise this, of which our Lord gave an earnest on the day of Pentecost, when he sent a gracious shower on his little vineyard, as a pledge of the mighty rivers of righteousness, which will, by and by, cover the earth as the waters cover the sea: Joel ii. 21, 28, 32, and iii. 19, 21.

Should you deny, Sir, that THE LORD, who will thus roar out of Sion, and then pour out his spirit on all flesh, is the Messiah, *the mighty God* described by *Isaiah*, I prove it by the following reasons, which I intreat you never to forget. (1) The bruising of the Serpent's head belongs to the wonderful Seed of the woman, to the child born to us whose name is the mighty God, and not to the Father who hath committed all judgment unto the Son: If you deny this, Sir, you not only represent Christ as a mere man, but as a man who renounces one of the Messiah's titles, which is *the true and faithful Witness*; for he hath expressly laid down, in *John*, the Proposition on which I built my argument: (2) The 19th Chap. of the *Revelation* contains a description of the Lord's strange work in the place, which *Joel* calls the *valley of decision* or of *Jehoshaphat*; and that terrible work is there declared by St. *John*, to be specially the work of the Son, whom he calls *the Word of God*. (3) *Joel* promises that *whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered*, and St. *Paul* in *Rom. x. 12, 13.* applies the words to our Lord Jesus Christ, as appears from the Apostle's doctrine in *Rom. i. 16,* and *Acts xvi. 31.* (4) The LORD, who in *Joel* acts the part of a Deliverer is *the Lord who shall call the remnant of the Jews,*
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and shall at last reconcile Jews and Gentiles in himself; and therefore is indubitably the Shiloh, unto whom the gathering of the people shall be, Comp. *Joel* ii. 32, with *Gen.* xlix. 10. And (5) *The Lord who dwelleth in Zion*, and who cleanseth the blood and sins of mankind by pouring out his spirit upon all flesh is certainly the Messiah, or Jehovah Shiloh, to whom the very words of *Joel*, are applied by St. *Peter*, in *Acts* ii. 16, 33.

Hoping, Sir, that you will not lose sight of these five arguments, I proceed to show you how some of the other lesser Prophets speak of the Messiah's days of vengeance and of refreshing.

Amos, as the other Prophets, shews the apostasy of the church, foretells her sifting punishment, her preservation during the great tribulation, and the day of vengeance, in which God with us, the Messiah will destroy all the wicked.

When the Church shall thus have been cleansed, and the wicked destroyed, the times of refreshing will come, which are thus foretold by this Prophet: *In that day I will raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof, and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old, [as in the days of Solomon, a type of the Prince of peace, who is the mighty God, the Lord of David as well as his Son.] Then shall the prosperity of God's people keep pace with their righteousness and overflow their peaceful habitations. They shall possess the remnant of Edom and of all the heathen, who are called by my name, saith the Lord who doth this: Then shall the plowman overtake the reaper, and the treader of the grapes, him that soweth the seed, and the mountains shall drop sweet wine. I will bring again the captivity of my people Israel, and plant them in their own land [rendered like the garden of Eden, And they shall no more be pulled out of it, saith the Lord God:*

their blood which I have not cleansed, for the LORD [Jehovah Shiloh] dwelleth in Zion. And the Prophet describes the means of this cleansing, in this noted Promise, I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your Sons and your daughters shall prophecy, &c. A capital promise this, of which our Lord gave an earnest on the day of Pentecost, when he sent a gracious shower on his little vineyard, as a pledge of the mighty rivers of righteousness, which will, by and by, cover the earth as the waters cover the sea: Joel ii. 21, 28, 32, and iii. 19, 21.

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[*Inmanuel, the Shiloh to whom shall be the gathering of the converted nations. Amos ix. 11, &c.*]

MICAH thus speaks of the second coming of the Messiah to do this strange work as Lion of the tribe of Judah: *Hear all the people, hearken, O Earth, and let the Lord God be witness against you from his holy temple: Behold the Lord will come down and tread upon the high places of the earth: The mountains shall be molten under him as wax before the fire, and the valleys shall be cleft. Mich. i. 2, 4.* But this terrible judgment shall begin at the House of the Lord, even at Zion and Jerusalem. *Hear ye Heads of the House of Jacob, that pervert all equity, and say, Is not the Lord among us? No evil can come upon us! Zion for your sake, shall be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps. Mic. iii. 11, 12.*

When the Lord's people shall have born his indignation, Shiloh will gather the purified remnant of them, and use them as his glorious instruments for the conversion, or the punishment of the wicked: *I will surely gather the remnant of Israel, I will put them together as the flock in the midst of the fold. *The breaker [the Bruiser of the Serpent] is come up before them: their King shall pass before them*

* This breaker is, by the confession of the Jews, the title of the Messiah. So the Author of *Sepher Abchath Ruchal*, in his description of the coming of the Messiah maketh use of this place. And the same appeareth further by that saying of Moses Haddarshan in *Beresht Rabba*, The Plantation from below is Abraham, the Plantation from above is Messiah, as it is written, "The breaker is come up before them &c." So he on Gen. xl. 9. Again the same *Beresht Rabba*, Gen. xlv. 18. *When shall we rejoice? when the feet of the Shechinah shall stand upon the mount of Olives; and again, When? when the captive shall ascend from Hell (death) and Shechinah in the head, as it is written, Mic. ii. 13. Their King shall pass before them, and the Lord in the head of them.* Pearson on the Creed. Art. 6th on Christ's Ascension.

them, and the Lord [Jehovah] on the head of them, to redeem them from the hand of their enemies. Mic. ii. 12. iv. 10.

The Messiah's strange work in the Valley of decision is thus described by this Prophet: Many nations are gathered against thee, O Zion, who say, Let her be defiled: But they know not the thoughts of the Lord, neither understand they his counsel; for he shall gather them as the sheaves into the floor: Arise and thresh O Daughter of Zion; for I will make thine horn iron, and thy hoofs brass, and thou shalt beat in pieces many people. Mich. iv. 11, 13.

After this day of vengeance, the days of refreshing shall come, and they are thus foretold by Micah, who had the brightest discoveries of the Glory of Shiloh, and of the gathering of the people unto him, after the destruction of the antichristian powers. But in the last days, saith that Prophet, the Mountain of the House of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains; people shall flow unto it, and many nations both awed by the Lord's tremendous judgments, and encouraged by his offers of grace and pardon) shall come, and say, Come let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and he will teach us his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law [of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus making men free from the law of sin and death] shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem [rebuilt.] And He [Jehovah Shiloh] shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off, and they shall beat their swords into plow-shares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more: But they shall sit every man under his vine, and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken it: and THE LORD shall reign over them in mount Zion, from henceforth even for ever. Mic. iv. 1, 7.

That the Lord Jehovah, who shall thus reign in mount Zion, when all spears shall be beat into plow-shares and into pruning hooks, is our Melchisedeck, the King of Salem, the Solomon of the Christian church, the *Prince of peace*, whose name is called the mighty God, by Isaiah, and of whose Government and peace, upon the throne of David, there shall be no end, can be proved even to a Jew by the following reasons: (1) This divine King is described, as doing the things which characterize the Messiah, namely bruising the Serpent, destroying the wicked, gathering Israel, and reigning over the nations: for unto him shall the gathering of the people be. (2) Micah calls him the Ruler of Israel, the Messiah, and describes his human and divine nature, as clearly as does Isaiah. *Thou Bethlehem, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah yet out of thee shall come forth He that is to be Ruler in Israel*, [here we see the Child born unto us in Bethlehem,] whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting: [and in these last words we behold the eternal generation and Divinity of the Son of God.] Mic. v. 2. And that Herod himself, with the Jewish Priests and the Scribes, made no doubt but this prophecy related to the Messiah, is evident from the account given by St. Matthew, for when King Herod had heard that the King of the Jews was born, and when he had gathered the chief Priests &c, by quoting this very prophecy of Micah, they proved to him, that the Messiah, he whose goings have been from everlasting, was to be born at Bethlehem.

The Prophet HABBAKUK, in that sublime Hymn, called his Prayer, has many expressions, very descriptive of the days of vengeance. *God came from Teman* (says he) *and the holy One from mount Paran. His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise. Before him went the pestilence,*

pestilence, and burning coals went forth at his feet. He stood and measured the earth: he beheld and drove asunder the nations, and the everlasting mountains were scattered, the perpetual hills did bow: his ways are everlasting. I saw the tents of Cushan in affliction: and the curtains of the land of Midian did tremble.—The mountains saw thee, and they trembled: the overflowing of the water passed by: the deep uttered his voice, and lifted up his hands on high. The sun and moon stood still in their habitation. Thou didst march through the land in indignation, thou didst thresh the heathen in anger. Thou wentest forth for the salvation of thy people, even for salvation with thine anointed. Thou woundest the head out of the house of the wicked.’ And as the Prophet considers these desolating judgments as being preparatory to the salvation of God’s people, so speaking in the name of the whole church, he describes the greatness of that salvation, when he says, a few verses after, ‘Although the fig-tree should not blossom, and there should be no fruit in the vine; yet will I rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation. The Lord God is my strength and he will make my feet like hinds feet, and he will make me walk upon mine high places.’ For, as he assures us in the preceding chapter, *the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea*, a passage which contains a most glorious testimony to the days of refreshing, during which, as *Isaiah* bears witness, the people shall be all righteous, the work of his hands, and the branch of his planting, that he may be glorified.

Zephaniah is very express upon this subject. Having described, at large, in the first and second Chapters of his Prophecy, the ruin that should come upon *Judea*, and the neighbouring countries,

tries, he proceeds, chap. iii. 8. to foretell the vengeance that should come upon all nations. *Wait ye upon me, saith the Lord, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger: for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy. Then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent. From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia, my suppliants, the daughter of my dispersed shall bring mine offering. The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth: for they shall feed and lie down and none shall make them afraid. In prospect of this glorious time, the Prophet calls upon the church under the ancient name of Zion, Jerusalem and Israel, to break forth in praise to Jehovah the Redeemer, who will then be indeed Immanuel, God with us. Sing, O daughter of Zion: Shout O Israel: Be glad and rejoice with all thine heart, O daughter of Jerusalem. The Lord hath taken away thy judgments: He hath cast out thine enemy: The King of Israel, even Jehovah, is in the midst of thee: thou shalt see evil no more. In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem, fear thou not: and to Zion, Let not thine hands be slack. The Lord, thy God in the midst of thee is mighty: he will save: he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love: he will joy over thee with singing. Behold at that time, adds the Lord, I will undo all that afflict thee, and I will save her that halteth, and gather her that was driven out: and I will get them praise and fame in every land, where they have been put to shame. At that time I will bring you again, even the time that I gather you, for I will make you a name and a praise among all people of the earth, when I turn back your captivity before your eyes, saith the Lord. Now, Sir,*

Sir, who is this King of *Israel* that is in the midst of us and is mighty, and who declares he will save, but the *word made flesh*, that dwelt among us, and came to save his people from their sins?

ZECHARIAH speaks to the same purpose. In the second Chapter, having mentioned the vengeance that should be taken upon the *Babylonians*, and other nations, that had spoiled God's people of old, an emblem of the wrath that will be poured upon the *modern Babylon*, he describes the days of refreshing in the following words, *sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion, for lo! I come, and dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord*: (This seems to refer primarily to the coming of Christ in the flesh.) *And many nations shall be joined to the Lord in that day, (viz. the gentile nations,) and shall be my people. And I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that the Lord of Hosts hath sent me unto thee. And the Lord shall inherit Judah, his portion, in the holy land, and shall chuse Jerusalem again*: which plainly foretels the conversion of the Jews and their restoration to their own land. And, perhaps, the following words, *Be silent all flesh before the Lord, for he is raised up out of his holy habitation*, may be intended as an intimation of the conversion of all mankind, their attendance upon the Lord in his ordinances, and their worshipping him in spirit and in truth.

MALACHI, also, the last of the Prophets, foretels, and that with great clearness, this twofold work of the Messiah. Having pointed him out as *the Lord that should come to his Temple, the Messenger of the Covenant* in whom (to be shortly revealed) the pious Jews delighted, rejoicing, like faithful *Abraham*, in the fore-sight of his day; he next informs us, what would be the effect of his manifestation in our flesh. *But who, says he, may abide the day of his coming? And who shall stand when he*
appeareth

appeareth? For he is like refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap, and he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and by the spirit of Judgment, as well as spirit of burning, he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord, an offering in righteousness. Then, the times of refreshing shall succeed the days of vengeance, and the offering of Judah and Jerusalem, shall be pleasant unto the Lord, as in the days of old, and as in the former years. For while the Lord comes near to Judgment and is a swift witness, against the forcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow and the fatherless, and that turn away the stranger from his right, and fear not the Lord; they that fear him, speak often one to another, and the Lord hearkens and hears, and a book of remembrance is written for those that fear the Lord and think upon his name, and they shall be mine saith the Lord, in the day when I make up my Jewels. Then shall ye turn and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not. And he speaks more clearly still in the next, (the last) Chapter. He first describes the days of vengeance. Behold the day cometh that shall burn as an oven, and all the proud, and all that do wickedly shall be as stubble: the day cometh that shall burn them up, and leave them neither root nor branch. He then foretells the days of refreshing, which shall succeed. But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings, and ye shall go forth and grow up as calves of the stall. And ye shall tread down the wicked, for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet, in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of Hosts.

Now, Sir, He before whose face Jehovah's Messenger, John the Baptist, was sent, and before whom he cried, Prepare ye the way of the Lord:
make

make his paths straight : He who suddenly comes to his Temple, and, appearing in it as the desire of all nations, gives it a glory, such as even Solomon's Temple had not, though besides the splendour and magnificence of the wonderful fabric, overlaid with silver and gold, it had five signs of the divine presence, as the Jews themselves have acknowledged, which were wanting in this *second* Temple ; viz. the *Urim* and *Thummin*, by which the High-Priest was miraculously instructed in the will of God ; the *Ark of the Covenant*, containing the two Tables of the Law written with the finger of God ; the *fire upon the Altar*, which came down from heaven ; the *Shekinah*, or visible display of the divine glory, and the *Spirit of Prophecy* :—He, who is like Refiner's fire and like Fuller's soap, and who sits upon the souls of men, as a Refiner and purifier of silver, purifying them from all pollution of the flesh and spirit : He who comes near, by his spiritual presence, as a swift witness against sinners of every description, while as the *Sun of righteousness* he rises upon those that fear the name of the Lord, with healing in his wings ; so that they go forth and grow up as calves of the stall : He surely must be something more than a mere man. Leaving you to reflect, Sir, on the contrariety of your doctrine, to that of the Prophets,

I remain, &c.

LETTER

LETTER VI.

The testimony born by the Prophets to the God-head of Christ.

REV. SIR,

HOW could you assert that none of the Prophets gave the Jews any other idea of the Messiah, than that of a man like themselves, when *Isaiah* had given Him names which are above every name, that at the names of our Saviour every knee should bow, and every believing Jew should confess that the Messiah is Lord God omnipotent? Had you forgotten this prophetic exultation, *Unto us the Child is born, unto us the Son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulders: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace?* *Isai. ix. 6.*

Your assertion is so much the more astonishing, as *Isaiah* in other places speaks of the Messiah, in terms as magnificent. Take two or three instances. That Prophet describes the Messiah's Humanity, as a Branch growing out of the roots of *Jesse*, as a holy Prince who shall judge with righteousness, reprove with equity, smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, slay the wicked with the breath of his lips, and so perfectly restore peace in the earth, that they shall not hurt nor destroy in all his holy mountain, or happy dominions, where even the Gentiles shall enjoy a glorious rest: For the adversaries of *Judah* shall be cut off, and *Ephraim* shall not envy *Judah*, nor shall *Judah* vex *Ephraim*: and the Lord shall utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea. *Isai. xi. 1, &c.* After this description of the Messiah, the Son

Son of God manifested as Son of David and Jesse, to destroy the works of the Devil, and to reign with his antients gloriously, the Prophet, in the name of the Church, sings, before hand, a song of thanksgiving to God our Saviour, for these mighty achievements. In that day (says he) thou shalt say, (The work of redemption is finished) Behold God is my salvation, the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song: he is become my salvation. Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation. Sing unto the Lord, for he hath done excellent things. Cry out, and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion, for great is the Holy one of Israel in the midst of thee. *Isai. xii. 1, &c.* It was impossible for a spiritual Jew to read this description of the Messiah's peaceful kingdom, without seeing that this Root of Jesse, this Holy one of Israel so great in the midst of Zion, was the same wonderful Person, whom the Prophet had just before called the Son given and the mighty God. And our Lord gave the Jews an assurance of it, when he cried on the great day of the feast, *If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink:* And this he did, when they had just been singing (as they did at that feast) those words of Isaiah, *You shall draw with joy water out of the wells of Salvation;* plainly intimating to them, as he had done to the woman of Samaria, that he was the divine spring of our joy, the Holy One of Israel in the midst of us, and the Jehovah become our salvation, and sung by Isaiah.

The same Prophet, personating John the Baptist, and foretelling the coming of the Messiah, says, *The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, (the way of Jehovah:) make straight in the desert a high way for our God.* Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain shall be made low, and the rough places plain; and the glory of THE LORD shall be revealed.

vealed.—O *Zion*, that bringest good tidings, or, as the Bishop of *London* reads it, O thou that bringest good tidings to *Zion*, O thou that publishest the gospel, lift up thy voice with strength, lift it up, be not afraid: Say to the cities of *Judah*. *BEHOLD YOUR GOD! Behold the Lord God will come with a strong hand, his reward is with him, and his work before him: Isai. xl. 3, 10.* This pompous description of the Messiah is again and again applied to our Lord in the New Testament. If *Isaiah* says to the Cities of *Judah*, *Behold your God*, *John* the Baptist crieth to them, *Behold the Lamb of God!* If the Lord God says (by his Prophet) *Behold the Lord will come, his reward is with him, &c. Thus saith the Lord, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts, I am the First, and the Last, and besides me, there is no God, Isai. xl. 10. and xlv. 6.* Our Lord applying to himself these lofty expressions of *Isaiah*, saith, *Behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be: I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the First and the Last. Rev. xxii. 12, 13.*

And if the *Jews* had not the New Testament, they had a number of Prophecies which confirmed and explained each other. Thus, suppose pious *Jews* would know who that God was, for whom they were to make the highways straight, and the rough places plain, *Isai. xl. 3.* they needed only read on to the eleventh verse, where we find this additional description of Him, *He shall feed his flock like a Shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are big with young.* And if they had not the Gospel of *St. John*, where our Lord says, *I am the good Shepherd*, they had the Prophecy of *Zechariah*, where this divine Shepherd is thus described, *Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd,*
against

against the man who is my Fellow, saith the Lord of Hosts: smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: Zech. xiii. 7. and Matth. xxvi. 31. And they saw in *Isaiah* how it pleased the Lord to bruise this Shepherd, when he made his soul an offering for sin, how he was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities; how all we like sheep have gone astray, and how the Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all. *Isai.* liii. 5, 6, 10. They had the Prophecy of *Ezekiel*, where this great Shepherd is thus described: *I will save my flock, I will set up one Shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David, he shall feed them, and he shall be their Shepherd, I the Lord have spoken it. And they shall no more be a prey to the heathen, neither shall the beasts of the land devour them, but they shall dwell safely, and none shall make them afraid: Ezek. xxxiv. 22, &c.* They had this prediction of *Hosea*. *The children of Israel shall abide many days without a King, and without a Prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an ephod: afterwards they shall return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their King, and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days. Hosea iii. 4.*

From these consentaneous prophecies the spiritual Jews saw that the Messiah their king, would appear both as the wonderful child promised to David, and as the mighty God called sometimes the Lord of hosts, and sometimes the Fellow of the Lord of hosts, according to the description, which St. John gave afterwards of him: *In the beginning He was with God, and He was God, and we have seen his glory, which is the glory of the only begotten of the Father, made flesh, and dwelling among us full of grace and truth.*

The Jews met some of these shining descriptions of the Messiah, as often as they searched

the Oracles of God, the Holy Ghost having taken care to multiply them, that the unbelieving in all ages might be without excuse.

Moses saith, *The Sceptre shall not depart from Judah, until Shiloh come; unto Him shall the gathering of the people be.* Gen. xlix. 10. Now the Spiritual Jews wanting to know who this Shiloh should be, did not fail to read over the other Prophets sent to enlarge upon this promise recorded by Moses, and they found this parallel description of the days of the Messiah, *In that day there shall be a Root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people: to it shall the Gentiles seek: And the LORD [Jehovah] shall set his hand the second time, [a plain account of the restoration of the Jews!] to recover the remnant of his people, and He shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel from the four corners of the earth.* Isai. xi. 10, &c.

Haggai confirms this prophecy where he writes, *Thus saith the Lord of hosts, I will yet once more shake the sea and the dry land; I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come, and I will fill this House, [the temple of Jerusalem] with glory, saith the Lord of hosts. The glory of this latter house, [built by Zerubbabel] shall be greater than of the former [built by Solomon,] saith the Lord of hosts. And in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts.* Hagai, ii. 6, 10. If a Jew enquired who this desire of nations, this Shiloh, should be, who was to come and fill the second temple with his glory, David gratifies this pious wish where he saith, *Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle. The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory.* Psalms xxiv. 7, &c.

But

But how could this King of glory be a Prophet like Moses, raised to the Jews from among their brethren? Deut. xviii. 18. Moses and Isaiah solve this difficulty, the former, where he saith, *The seed of the woman shall be strong enough to bruise the serpent's head*; and the latter, where he declares, *The Lord himself shall give you a sign: Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son, and shall call his name IMMANUEL*, [which, being interpreted, is *GOD WITH US, GOD manifested in the flesh.*] Isai. vii. 4. Matth. i. 23. and 1 Tim. iii. 16.

Read, dear Sir, the Scriptures without the veil of your system, and you will see that the Messiah, the wonderful Person whom you so constantly endeavour to degrade, was to be a mediating Prophet, like Moses, an atoning Priest like Aaron, a pacific King like Solomon, a royal Prophet like David, a kingly Priest like Melchisedech, the everlasting Father as the Logos by whom all things were created, and the mighty God, as the proper Son of Him, with whom he shares in the unity of the divine Spirit, the supreme title of *Jehovah, Lord of hosts.*

JEREMIAH gives us as noble a view of the Messiah, *Behold (says he) the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto DAVID a RIGHTEOUS Branch: a KING shall reign and prosper, and shall execute justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name, whereby he shall be called, THE LORD [Jehovah] our righteousness: Jerem. xxiii. 5.* Pious Jews could not but see that the righteous King of David's family, who was promised by Jeremiah, was the same as the Prince of peace sitting upon David's throne, who would extend his peaceful government to the end of ages, according to Isaiah's Prophecy, and both Prophets agree to call this wonderful King, *Jehovah, the mighty God.*

IF *Isaiah* speaking of him, and prophesying our Lord's incarnation, saith, *A Virgin shall bear a Son*, *Jeremiah*, alluding to the same mystery, says, *The Lord createth a new thing in the earth, A Woman shall compass a man. Behold the days come saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with Israel:—I will put my laws in their hearts, they shall all know me, I will forgive their iniquity: Jer. xxxi. 22, 34.* And that these pardons shall come by believing in the *righteous Branch* raised unto *David*, who shall be called *THE LORD our righteousness*, appears from the description which the same Prophet gives us of the Church made all glorious, by partaking of that sanctifying spirit, which makes believers look at Christ's glorious righteousness, till they are changed into the same image, from glory to glory. *In those days (saith he) Judah shall be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely, and this is the name whereby she shall be called, The Lord our righteousness: Jer. xxxiii. 16.* As if he had said, Every one who shall come to Mount Zion, and the New Jerusalem, shall be so grafted into the *righteous Branch* raised unto *David*, and so filled with the sap of that divine tree of life, that they shall in some degree be transformed into it, and be called by the same name, as a wife is called by the name of her husband. And, methinks, I see this glorious prophecy accomplished, when I find believers so *Christened*, so completely united to Christ, as to be righteous as He is righteous; of this stamp was certainly he who said, *I will know nothing but Christ, and him crucified,—I live not, it is Christ who liveth in me, and the life which I now live, I live by believing in the Son of God, who is made unto me wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption: Gal. ii. 20, & 1 Cor. i. 30.*

EZEKIEL.

EZEKIEL. Our Lord's Divinity is not so fully declared by *Ezekiel*, as by *Jeremiah*; glorious hints of it may, nevertheless, be collected from his writings, if they are searched for, with the light supplied by the harmony of the Scriptures.

I need not inform you, Rev. Sir, that 'till the end come, the Father hath committed all authority and judgment to the Son, John v. 22; and that the Father will gloriously reign on the earth in and by his Son, his other self; or the express image of his glory; for you have read these words of a Prophet, *I saw in the night visions, and behold one like the Son of man, came with the clouds of heaven to the Ancient of days, and there was given him (as he is Son of man) dominion and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve Him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away: and his kingdom, that which shall not be destroyed: [though he will, in a future period of time, give it up to the Father: and then, the Son shall only reign in the Father,]* Dan. vii. 13. But, it is proper to remind you, that Immanuel (being both *the mighty God, and the child born to bruise the Serpent's head,*) may be considered some times as God, or proper Son of God the Father, and some times as Man, or proper son of a woman, and in either case he bears very different names. (1) As proper Son of God the Father, he is called *Jehovah—the Lord of hosts—God our Redeemer, &c.* (2) As Son of a Virgin, he is called a *Branch of Jesse, David, Son of David, Son of Man, and Servant of God*, because he is equally obedient to the commands of the Father, the will of the Logos, and the motions of the Holy Ghost: And (3) when he is considered in his complex nature, as being the proper Son of God, and the real Son of Mary, wonderfully united in the Person of the Messiah,
he

he is called *Immanuel*, *God manifested in the flesh*, *the Word made flesh*, or *Jehovah Shepherd*.

This being premised, you will understand me, Sir, if I observe, that *Ezekiel* declares the glory of the *Messiah* considered in these three different points of view. Thus he represents *God our Saviour*, as *Jehovah Shepherd*, where he says, *Thus saith the Lord God, Behold I, even I will search out my sheep. As a Shepherd seeketh out his scattered flock, so will I seek out my sheep, and will gather them from the countries where they have been scattered in the cloudy day:—And I will feed them in a good pasture, upon the mountains of Israel; I will seek that which was lost, bring again that which was driven away, bind that which was broken, strengthen that which was sick: but I will destroy the fat and the strong (the stubborn and the proud) Behold, saith the Lord God, I judge between the sheep and the goats: Ezek. xxxiv. 11, 17.*

Now, Rev. Sir, that this *Jehovah Shepherd* is *Immanuel*, I prove to you, both from the *Old* and the *New Testament*. (1) From the *New*, where our Lord, applying to himself these very words of *God in Ezekiel*, says, *When the Son of man shall come in his glory* [in the glory of the *Godhead* into which he hath been assumed] *he shall separate the sons of men one from another, as a Shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: Matt. xxv. 31.* And (2) from the *Old Testament*: For, in this very chapter of *Ezekiel* under consideration, we see *God our Shepherd*, pointing out to us the divine obedient man, in whom he condescended to become visible, and whom he calls his *Servant*, because *Christ, as Son of David*, is as perfectly obedient to the *Father*, and to the *Word*, considered as *David's Lord*, as in a good man the body is perfectly obedient to the dictates of the rational soul to which it is united. For in the complex person

person of our Lord, God and Man is one Christ. *I will save my flock, saith Jehovah Shepherd; they shall no more be a prey, and I will judge between cattle and cattle.* But will he do it as invisible God, or by means of a Mediator, a man, in whom he will become visible? Here, the Lord answers by Ezekiel, who thus points out the *Humanity*, as he had before asserted the *Divinity* of our Lord: *And I will set up one Shepherd over them, even my Servant David: He shall be their [visible] Shepherd, And I the Lord will be their God, and my Servant David, a [visible] Prince among them, I the Lord have spoken it.* And the Lord that speaks here, is the Logos, the Word of the Father, the Word of the Lord, which came to the Prophets, and manifested to them the will of the Father by the Holy Spirit: For so intimately *One* are the Father and the Son, that the Son can do nothing of himself (as if he were divided from the Father) but *what things soever the Father doth, these also the Son doth likewise:* John v. 19, and Ezekiel xxxiv. 22, &c.

The Jehovah Shepherd and Feeder, whom Ezekiel declared in the 34th chapter of his Prophecy, is next extolled as *Jehovah Subduer, and Purifier.*

Thus saith the Lord God to the House of Israel, *I will gather you out of all countries, and then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and cleanse you from all filthiness and all your idols. A new heart will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you, and cause you to walk in my Statutes [or to be my faithful and obedient subjects,] and ye shall be my [happy] people.*

Now, Rev. Sir, that the Lord will thus subdue and purify Israel, in and by a Mediator, in whom he will become visible, and by whom he will operate all the wonders here promised, I prove both from the New and Old Testament. (1) From the

the New:—John the Baptist, pointing out this divine Purifier said, as he shewed our Lord, *Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world; I indeed baptize you with water, but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost: He shall pour out the Spirit promised by Ezekiel.* John i. 29, 33.

(2) From the Old Testament:—For we read in the next Chapter of Ezekiel, *Thus, saith the Lord God, Behold I will gather the children of Israel on every side, and bring them into their own land, and I will make them one nation, and one King shall reign over them all. Neither shall they defile themselves any more with idols, nor with any of their transgressions, but I will save and cleanse them; So shall they be my people, and I will be their God, and David [here comes in our Lord considered as Son of man] and David my Servant shall be King over them, and they all shall have one Shepherd, and [by his example and help] they shall walk in my judgments.—And my Servant David, shall be their Prince for ever,—and I will set my Sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore: Ezek. xxxvii. 21, 26. And, St. John describes this glorious Sanctuary, where he saith, *I saw no Temple in the new Jerusalem, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb, [or Jehovah and the divine Mediator, in whom he manifests himself] are the temple of it: Rev. xxi. 22.**

It remains now to show that Ezekiel speaks also of our Lord, as *Jehovah Quickener*; nor need I go beyond the chapter last quoted, to find a reasonable proof of it, for in the beginning of that chapter, the Lord God shews to the Prophet, the deplorable state of corruption and death, in which were mankind in general, and the Jews in particular, by the striking emblem of a valley full of dry bones, and saith to these bones, *Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live, and know that I am the Lord, when I have brought you up out*
of

of your graves, and put my spirit in you: Ezekiel xxxvii. 1, 14. If you ask, Will not the Lord God do this himself immediately? I answer in the negative, for three reasons: (1) Even in the emblematic vision, God did not raise the dry bones till the Prophet, who was a type of our great Prophet, had prophesied to the Spirit, and called for the quickening breath to come from the four winds, that the slain might live: ver. 9 and 10.—(2) This mediating and quickening Prophet, is immediately mentioned, and called *DAVID*, the *Servant of God*, and the *Prince of the people for ever*: ver. 24 and 25.—(3) It could not be the Son of Jesse, *David*, who had been dead some hundred years when *Ezekiel* prophesied.—(4) It was then He, whom *Daniel* calls *Messiah the Prince*, and whom the Evangelists name *Jesus, the Son of David, by the Virgin Mary*.—And (5) that our Lord, considered as Son of man, is the wonderful Agent of *Jehovah* quickener, who dwells in him bodily, is evident from his own words: *I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. I am the resurrection, and the life: The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live: For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. And this Son of God having joined himself to our nature, that he might raise us from our fall, is now, and for ever will be that Messiah the Prince, whose sufferings and glory were foretold by Daniel, and by Ezekiel, and whom St. Paul calls a quickening Spirit, and the Lord from Heaven.* From these five reasons, we may, I think, safely conclude, that *Ezekiel* hath foretold the glory of the Messiah, as the mighty God, and the Child born to us. I have dwelt the longer on this proof of our Lord's Divinity from this Prophet, because
even

even good Mr. Henry says, that *Ezekiel* speaks less of Christ, than almost any of the Prophets.

Should you say, Sir, that the Jews, not having the proofs which I adduce from the New Testament, could not possibly find out, that the great Shepherd, who is to gather *Israel*, and the King *David*, who shall reign over God's people for ever, is more than man; I reply, in the language of our Lord, *Search the Old Testament*, and you will find, that it *testifieth* of our Lord's divine glory.

Do you believe, Sir, that *all* the Jews put a veil upon their faces, when they fathomed the depth of the 2d *Psalms*? Did none make such obvious remarks as these? (1) *Jehovah* hath a King, to whom he will give the heathen [all nations] and the utmost parts of the earth [all kingdoms.]—(2) To take counsel against this anointed King, is to take counsel against *Jehovah*.—(3) He that sitteth in the heavens shall vex, in his sore displeasure, those Judges of the earth, that will not serve Him of whom he saith, *I have set my King upon my holy hill of Sion*.—(4) So little is the Father jealous of the divine honours paid to his Son, that he says, even to Kings, by the *Psalmist*, *Kiss* [adore] the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way [of salvation and eternal bliss.]—(5) This Son is not a Son by creation, as *Adam* was, nor by Adoption, as godly men are, but he is a Son by nature and real communication of Divinity; for the eternal Father says, *Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee*.—(6) The Prophet, being persuaded, that adoration is due to this Son, says, *Kiss him, lest he be angry at your ingratitude, injustice, and insolence*.—(7) The Father declaring his decree, concerning the proud opposers of his Son's dignity, says, in his wrath, *Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; Thou shalt dash*

dash them in pieces, like a potter's vessel.—(8) So terribly glorious is the Majesty of this divine Son, that his enemies shall be dashed in pieces if his wrath is kindled, yea but a little.—But (9) What convinced the humble Jews, that the Messiah would have divine honours paid him by all the nations, was the conclusion of the Psalm, *Blessed are they that put their trust in Him.* For they could not but reason thus, consistently with the Scriptures, on which they meditated day and night: This Son, anointed with so much solemnity, King of Kings, and Lord of the universe, must be so intimately one with the Father, as to be one and the same Jehovah. Were he a mere man, it would be gross idolatry to rely upon him for salvation; for, *Curst is the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm; and whose heart departeth from the Lord:* Jer. xvii. 5. 7. But, instead of denouncing such a curse on every one who trusteth in the Messiah, the Prophet declares, by a positive command, that this wonderful Son is Jehovah: For, the Law and the Prophets agree to say, *All flesh is grass; Trust ye in the Lord Jehovah, for in him is everlasting strength:* Isaiah xxvi. 4. From these nine observations, it is evident, that all the spiritual Jews, who had read the second Psalm, with humble attention, must be convinced that the Father had a divine and everlasting Son, who deserved the name of mighty God and Father of eternity. Nor were they surprised at this doctrine, for (1) They they had looked with reverential fear into the mystery dimly seen by Solomon, and by Isaiah, when they asked, *Who shall declare his generation? Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? Who hath established the ends of the earth? What is his name, and what is his Son's name, if thou canst tell?* Isa. liii. 8. and Prov. xxx. 4 — Moses had intimated to them, in the first line of

Genesis, that some diversity of Subsistences existed in the unity of the divine Essence: He had positively declared, that man's creation was the result of the deep counsel of these Subsistences: and, that after the fall of man, they [to speak after the manner of men] again consulted about that sad event: *Gen. i. 1, 26, and iii. 22.* And they had reason to think that the divine Subsistence, which their Prophets sometimes called *the Word of the Lord*, and the *Son*, was that living and active *Wisdom*, by which God established the heavens and founded the earth, and which speaks thus, in the *Book of Proverbs*: *The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old: I was set up from everlasting: When there were no depths, I was brought forth: When he prepared the heavens, I was there:—I was with Him, as one brought up with him; and I was daily his delight; rejoicing always before Him; and my delights were with the sons of men.* *Prov. iii. 19, and viii. 22, &c.*

Permit me to lay before you another striking proof of the Messiah's divinity, when he is considered in his form of God. *How beautiful, saith Isaiah (and St. Paul after him) How beautiful are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, publisheth salvation, and saith unto Zion, THY GOD REIGNETH: Isaiah lli. 7. Rom. x. 15.* But who is this King, this reigning God? The sacred Penmen answer, with one accord, It is the wonderful child born to us, whose name shall be the mighty God, and the Prince of peace, because of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom to order it, and to establish it with judgment, and justice for ever: *Isai. ix. 7.—Rejoice greatly O Zion, saith Zechariah, whose words are echoed by two Apostles, shout O Daughter of Jerusalem, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, he is just, -having salvation, lowly, and riding*

riding upon a colt, the foal of an ass.—He shall speak peace to the heathen, and his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the river, even to the ends of the earth. Zech. ix. 9, 10. cited in Matt. xxi. 5, and John xii. 15. When the Prophet hath thus described the coming of the Messiah the King, in his state of humiliation, he immediately describes his glorious advent to destroy those who would not have him to reign over them. *When I have bent Judah for me* [saith this divine King] *and raised up thy Sons, O Zion, against thy Sons, O Greece, the LORD* [Messiah the Prince in his divine Majesty] *shall be seen over them, and his arrows shall go forth as lightning: The Lord God* [heading the Sons of Zion] *shall blow the trumpet* [or give the warlike signal] *and go with whirlwinds of the South* [with the most impetuous power] *and shall save them in that day, as the flock of his people. For how great is his goodness, and how great is his beauty?* Zech. ix. 13, 17.

Though this proof of our Lord's divinity seems to me a demonstration, I shall, nevertheless, strengthen it still more by parallel testimonies of the other Prophets.

It is not in the second Psalm only, that David declares the Divinity of Christ, our anointed King. He is not afraid of tautology, when he dwells on so glorious a subject. What can be plainer than the 45th Psalm, which an Apostle justly applies to our Lord. Addressing the Messiah, emphatically stiled the King, the Psalmist says, under a prophetic view of him, both as the mighty God, and the child born unto us, *Thou art fairer than the children of men; grace is poured into thy lips: therefore, God hath blessed thee for ever. Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most Mighty, and in thy majesty ride prosperously, and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things. Thy arrows are very*

sharp,

sharp, in the heart of the King's enemies.—Thy Throne, O God, is for ever and ever, the Sceptre of thy kingdom is a righteous Sceptre, therefore, God, thy God [the Father] hath anointed Thee [his only begotten Son] with the oil of gladness, above thy Fellows: [above all Kings on earth, and in heaven] Psalm xlv. 1, 7, compared with Heb. i. 8, 9. Thus, you see, Sir, that this most mighty KING of Israel, and of the universe, is called God, as well as the Father, who hath anointed him.

Nor ought we to wonder that, after such a display of his divinity, the Psalmist addresses the Jewish and the universal Church, in a strain suitable to the divine honours, which he pays to the Messiah. Calling her *Daughter*, and *Queen*, *all glorious within* [whom St. John styles, *the Wife of the Lamb*] *For sake thy own people* [says he, the Egyptians, the Canaanites, the Babylonians, among whom thou wast born, and by whom thou hast been corrupted:] *So shall the King greatly desire thy beauty: for he is thy LORD, and worship thou Him.* Then, turning again to this King of Kings, he concludes the Psalm, by saying, *The people shall praise thee for ever and ever.* Psalm xlv. 10, 17. Thus, you see, Sir, that a Prophet, considering the Messiah's glory, calls him the LORD, and the GOD of the Church, whom he charges to worship him, and does solemnly what an Apostle did afterwards when, worshipping Christ, he cried out, in an extacy of joy, *My Lord, and my God!* But, what peculiarly deserves notice, is, that when *David* is about to declare our Lord's Divinity, he begins, by saying, *My heart is inditing a good matter:* calling that a *good Matter*, which you call *Idolatry*, and the capital corruption of our divine worship.

Whilst you consider how you can reconcile yourself with the royal Prophet, I shall confront your paradox, with three other Psalms, where he continues to indite the same glorious matter, the 47th,

68th and 110th.. Propheſying of our Lord's glorious kingdom, of which he began to take poſſeſſion, on the day of his Aſcenſion, the Pſalmiſt ſays, *Clap your hands all ye people, ſhout unto God, with the voice of triumph. The Lord moſt high is terrible: he is King over all the earth. He ſhall ſubdue the people under us:—God is gone up with a ſhout, the Lord with the ſound of a trumpet. Sing praises unto our God: O ſing praises unto our King: For God is the King of all the earth. God reigneth over the heathen: God ſitteth upon his holy ſeat: Pſalm xlvi. 1, 8.* Is it not evident to thoſe who candidly compare ſcripture with ſcripture, that this divine King, whom the Pſalmiſt ſo often calls God, and who is gone up with a joyful noiſe, is the anointed King, of whom the Father ſaith, *I have ſet my King upon my holy Hill of Sion: Thou art my Son. Kiſs the Son, ye Kings, leſt ye periſh?* Is he not the Almighty, of whom the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks thus, *This is God's Hill, in which it pleaſeth him to dwell: The chariots of God are twenty thouſand, even thouſands of Angels, and the Lord is among them, as in the holy place of Sinai. Thou art gone upon high, thou haſt led captivity captive, and received gifts for men.—He is our God, even the God of whom cometh ſalvation—the Lord, by whom we eſcape death;—who ſhall wound the head of his enemies;—who gave the word [on the day of Pentecoſt] and great was the company of the Preachers, inſomuch, that the armies of his enemies were ſcattered, and they of his houſehold divided the ſpoil: Pſalm lxxviii. 10, 21.*

A Jew might be convinced, from the bare comparison of thoſe Pſalms; but the conviction will admit of no ſhadow of doubt for thoſe who receive the New Teſtament, where St. Paul, after quoting theſe words of David, *Thou [O God, who of thy goodneſs haſt prepared gifts for the poor] haſt*

ascended up on high, and led captivity captive, &c. applies them to our Lord; and concludes thus, Now, that he (the Messiah) ascended, what is it [but a demonstration] that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth. He that descended [as the child born unto us] is the same who (after his resurrection) ascended up far above all heavens, that [as the mighty God] he might fill all things: And to prove that he was this gracious God, out of whose fulness the poor (humble believers) receive grace for grace, he gave them [besides his holy spirit] Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers, that they might all come to the stature of a perfect man, or to the measure of Christ, considered as the Son of man. Eph. iv. 8, 13.

The last Psalm I shall produce in vindication of the Lord's divinity is the 110th, where David, still considering our Lord as that mighty God, who became the wonderful seed of the woman, and the Son given unto us, expresses himself thus: *The Lord [God the Father] said unto my Lord [to the Son whom he had commanded the Church to worship, see the 45th Pl. above quoted] Sit thou at my right hand, untill I make thine enemies thy footstool. Rule thou in the midst of them, with the rod of thy power (that rod of iron which will dash them in pieces like a potters' vessel, Psalm ii. 9) The Lord (who made the decree, Psalm ii. 7, and at whose right hand thou sittest, as sharer in his supreme dominion) hath sworn, and will not repent. Thou art a royal Priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedeck.*

The Father compares here his only begotten Son to Melchisedeck, for five reasons:—(1) That Monarch was *King of Salem*, where stood Mount Sion, a well-known type of that mountain, which is to command all other mountains, or (to speak without metaphor) of that kingdom, which is to swallow

swallow up all other kingdoms: see Isa. ii. 2, and Dan. ii. 44.—(2) Because that Prince's name, signifying both *King of righteousness*, and *King of peace*, was the most proper name to give the Jews a true idea of *the kingdom of righteousness, peace and joy*, which the Messiah, *the Lord our righteousness*, was to set up.—(3) Because sacred History throws a mysterious veil upon the genealogy of *Melchisedeck*, that he might be a proper type of that *wonderful Prince of Peace*, whom *Isaiah* describes, when he asks, *Who shall declare his generation? Who shall shew how he is David's Son, and David's Lord?* A deep mystery this, of which the Apostle gives us an idea, when, speaking of the King of Salem, he says, Consider how great this Personage was [the word *man* is not in the original] unto whom even the Patriarch *Abraham* gave the portion of the high Priest, and the capital share of the spoil, as unto his own King. This Prince of peace, *without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life, but made like unto the Son of God, and abiding a Priest continually*; blessed *Abraham* himself, in whom all the families of the earth were to be blessed, and without contradiction, the less is blessed of the greater, Heb. vii. 3, &c.—(4) Because, as *Abraham*, and his righteous servants, strengthened by *Melchisedeck's* pious wishes, smote the ungodly kings, who had carried away righteous Lot, so the Sons of Zion, (to use the language of *Zechariah*) shall smite the sons of Greece, when, under the influence, and by the blessing of our *Melchisedeck*, they shall do the strange, but necessary work, described in Psalm cxlix, and in Rev. xix.—(5) Because, the joyful manner in which they were met, refreshed and blessed by *Melchisedeck*, was an emblem of those times of refreshing, which, after the overthrow of all wicked Powers, will come from

from the presence of the Lord, when all the Prisoners of hope, turning to the strong hold, shall be more than conquerors, through him that loved us; shall reap the fruit of the victory described in Zech. ix. 12, 17, and in 2 Thes. i. 5—10; and shall enjoy the blessing pointed out in Isa. lxxv. 13, 25. Dan. vii. 27. 2 Pet. iii. 13, and Rev. xx. 1.

This being premised, I return to the Psalm where *Jehovah*, our righteousness, is pointed out to us, under the glorious emblem of *Melchisedech*. *David* foretelling the victories of the Messiah, and the destruction of his enemies, says, *The Lord, at thy (the Father's) right hand, shall strike through Kings, in the days of his wrath, he shall act the part of a Judge among the heathen, he shall fill the places with the dead bodies; he shall wound the Heads over many countries.* But the heel of the woman's seed shall be bruised, the Prince of peace shall suffer in his human nature, which is represented by the inferior part of his person: *The floods shall overflow him for three days and three nights, as they did Jonah, the waters shall come in, even unto his soul, he shall drink of the cup of affliction, or as David expresses it, he shall drink of the brook by the way, therefore shall he lift up his head: his divine nature shall make him emerge from a sea of sorrow, having saved himself, he will save his people; and as he bowed his head, saying, It is finished, when he had finished his atoning work, as our great high Priest, so shall he triumphantly lift up his head, and reign.* Then will the Church, with all the nations in her bosom, sing the Psalm, where *David* describes the works, and foretells the glory of *Immanuel*: *The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved; He uttered his voice (or as Zachariah expresses it, The Lord God blew the trumpet, Chap. ix. 14) and the Earth melted away:—Come, behold the works of*

of the Lord, [of Immanuel, our *Melchisedeck*, executing judgment among the heathen, and striking through Kings in the days of his wrath, Ps. cx. 4.] See what desolations he hath made in the earth:—*He maketh wars to cease, unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, cutteth the spear in sunder, and burneth the chariots in the fire.* Immanuel, Messiah, the mighty God, and the Prince of peace, lifting up his head, as an almighty Conqueror, and vouchsafing to enter into the universal song of triumph, says, *Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.* And ravished with admiration, the Church, joining in a grand Chorus, bursts into this joyful exclamation, *The Lord of Hosts is with us, Immanuel reigns, and the God of Jacob is our refuge: Psalm xlv. 1, 11.*

Some persons, who mistake an unrighteous weakness of mind, and an effeminate softness of temper for mildness and charity, will be ready to think these terrible descriptions of our Saviour's judicial work, inconsistent with the gentleness of our Lord, but St. John speaks of the righteous wrath of the Lamb, and when he represents the Messiah, as the Bruiser of the Serpent's head, he does not scruple to call him *the Lion of the tribe of Judah*; alluding to Jacob's prophecy, that *Judah*, from whose tribe *Shiloh* was to spring, would be like the Lion, whom none should rouse without imminent danger.

As for St. Paul, he was so far from thinking this judicial work of our Lord incompatible with his character, that speaking of the great tribulation of the wicked, and of the righteous judgment which shall make way for the Messiah's glorious Kingdom, he says, *It is a righteous thing with God to recompence tribulation to them that trouble the righteous, and to give rest (even in this world)*

to those who are troubled by the wicked: And, he observes, that this rest, these times of refreshing from the Lord, will take place when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, the wicked heathen, and on them who obey not the gospel (wicked christians) who shall be punished with an everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power, when he shall come in that day of tribulation, to be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe.

This work of the mighty God, before the setting of his glorious Empire, as King of Salem, and Prince of peace, is thus further described by a Prophet. THE LORD [JEHOVAH our Saviour] shall go forth and fight against those [ungodly] nations: And his feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem, on the East. Then shall be fulfilled the saying of the two angels, on the day of our Lord's ascension, This same Jesus, who is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner [in a visible, human and glorious form] as ye have seen him go into heaven. And, it is remarkable, that this prophecy was delivered on that very Mount of Olives, whence our Lord gloriously ascended, and where, according to Zechariah, he will alight at his return from heaven: See Acts i. 12, and Zech. xiv. 4.

The Prophet continuing his description of those times of refreshing, consequent on the return of our Melchisedeck, observes, that many wonderful interpositions, of a judicial and kind providence, will be displayed for the preservation of the righteous, and for the destruction or conversion of the wicked; and then sums up his prediction, by saying, In that day, there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the Lord of hosts. Holiness unto the Lord shall be written upon the very bells of the horses [and their drivers, who are now stupid, and prophane to a proverb, will be among the

the saints of the most high.] In a word, *the living waters*, the streams of truth, righteousness, peace and bliss which gladden the city of God, the city of the great King, *shall go out from Jerusalem* and gladden the whole world; for *the Lord* (that very Jehovah mentioned just before, whose feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives) *shall be King over all the earth: In that day shall there be one Lord, and his name one.* Zech. xiv. 3, 8, 9, 20, 21.

Methinks, Rev. Sir, I hear you triumph and say at these last words of the Prophet, "We Unitarians shall then win the day at last, and the worship of God in Trinity will be abolished for ever."—Not so, Sir; *Zechariah* and the Holy Ghost who inspired him, do not contradict themselves. Read again the whole chapter and you will see that Jehovah who will be King over all the earth is *Jehovah*, manifested in the flesh whose feet shall stand upon the Mount of Olives: So that whoever is excluded from the dominion, it cannot be the Son, who is so described as to leave no doubt that he is to be King over all the earth. Thus your unscriptural unity which rejects the Son's Divinity is completely overthrown by *Zechariah*. The truth which he wants to inculcate is that when Christianity shall have removed all Atheism and all Idolatry, the one Divine Essence will be known and worship'd every where. And if you please to call the Father Jehovah *invisible* to his creatures, the Son Jehovah *visible*, and the Holy Ghost Jehovah *sensible* to his rational creatures, we will not contend with you. Grant us that in the supreme Being there is an ineffable and adorable Trinity, and we will readily grant you that this Trinity is such as by no means breaks the ineffable Unity which we adore as well as you, though we do not with the Jewish Zealots, take up stones to throw at the Son, under pretence of

of asserting the Father's glory; such a defence of the divine Unity appearing unto us as unnatural as it is unscriptural.

Take a proof that *Zechariah* by no means wants to exclude our Lord from Divinity, tho' he stands up for the divine Unity: A Prophet says, *The children of Israel (after their rejection of the Shiloh) shall abide many days without a King, and without a Prince, and without a Sacrifice; afterwards they shall return and seek the Lord their God and David their King, and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days; Hos. iii. 5.* Now this *David* the King, who shall reign in the latter days over the converted Jews and Gentiles, is the same King who is described in the 2, 45, 46, and 110 Psalms, &c. as the Lord God of *David*, and of the whole world, and that *Zechariah* calls him Lord, as he does the Father, I prove by this divine promise, *I will save the house of Joseph, and they shall be as tho' I had not cast them off; for I am the Lord their God. I will gather them, for I have redeemed them;—and I will strengthen them in the Lord, and they shall walk up and down in his name, saith the Lord. Zech. x. 6, 12.* From these words I conclude that *Zechariah*, far from overturning that Unity of God, which is consistent with the Divinity of the Father and the Son, teaches us that these two divine Subsistences jointly bear the name of *Jehovah*, in the one divine Essence. And if you ask who this Lord is that says *I will strengthen them in or by the Lord, that they may walk in his name*, I answer that the consistent tenour of the Scriptures proves that it is the same mighty God, who, when he appear'd as the Son given unto us, said to the eleven apostles, *without me ye can do nothing*, and who strengthened *St. Paul* by saying to him, *my grace is sufficient for thee*, and whom the Apostle had in view when he wrote, *Son Timothy, be strong in the grace, that is Christ Jesus.*
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Of all the gracious means, which the Lord will use to overcome those of his enemies, whom he shall not find completely obdurate, one will be attended with the greatest success, and as it is recorded both in the old and new Testament, and affords us a strong proof of our *Melchisedeck's* divinity, I shall describe it here.

Speaking of the Lord who punishes faithless *Jerusalem*, and makes her triumph when she repents and returns, *Zechariah* says, Thus saith the Lord, who stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him, In that day, I will make *Jerusalem* a burdensome stone for all people, and *Judah* shall be like a torch of fire in a sheaf, they shall devour all the people round about, and *Jerusalem* shall be rebuilt and inhabited again in her own place.—And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will destroy all the nations that come against *Jerusalem*: And I will pour upon the house of *David* and the inhabitants of *Jerusalem* the spirit of grace and supplication, and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, [in the person of *Messiah* the Prince in whom dwells the fulness of the Godhead bodily] and they shall mourn for him [the Prince of peace pierced] as one mourneth for his only Son, and shall be in bitterness for Him, as one that is in bitterness for his first born [pierced in his sight.] In that day [of *Shiloh's* return, when he shall overcome unbelieving Jews, and faithless Christians, in the same manner in which he overcame the unbelief of *Thomas*] there shall be a great mourning in *Jerusalem*, as the mourning of *Hadadrimmon* in the valley of *Megiddon* [from which the *Israelites* brought back to *Jerusalem* their good King *Josiah*, wounded to death by the *Egyptians*.] *Zech. xiii. 1, 11.* Behold, says *St. John*, confirming this prophecy, He cometh with clouds: and every eye shall see Him,

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and

and they also who pierced him and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him : Rev. i. 7. If you ask St. John of whom he speaks, he immediately mentions the mighty God of *Isaiah* : As for *Zechariah*, he hath already told us, that he means *Jehovah*, who formeth the spirit of man within him, the creating Logos, by whom all things were made, and who, by assuming our nature, became *Immanuel*, that he might make an atonement and give himself a ransom for his sinful brethren.

LETTER

LETTER VII.

The Evangelists and Apostles bear testimony to the Divinity of Christ.

REV. SIR,

IN your *History of the corruptions of Christianity*, vol. 1. page 144, you assert, that *they [the Apostles after their supernatural illumination] never gave Him [our Lord] any higher Title than that of a man approved of God: Acts ii. 22.* Now, Sir, if this assertion be true, the Scriptures are on your side; but if ALL the Apostles, whose writings are come down to us, rise against it, you will please to remember, that your Doctrine is built upon the sand.

We grant you, Sir, that St. Peter, considering the furious prejudices of the Jews, in the *beginning* of his *first* sermon, did not preach to them the divinity of Christ, which would have been an absurd step; because, far from being disposed to believe that our Lord was *very God of very God*, many of them did not so much as believe that he was a good man. Wisdom therefore forbade that Apostle to dazzle his hearers at once, by the glorious light of this doctrine. Hence he called at first his divine Master, *a Man approved of God*. But did he not, before he concluded, represent Him as taken up to the very throne of the Father, and placed on the highest seat in heaven, at the right hand of the Majesty on high, as one whom the Father will see honoured with Himself, by all men and all angels? In a word, did not Peter apply to our Lord these words of the royal Prophet: *Ps. cx. 1. The Lord said unto MY LORD, sit thou at my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy*

foot-stool? Acts ii. 34. Words so strongly expressive of a dignity superior to that of a *mere man*, that they represent the Father himself, as determined to see the Partner of his throne worshipped by all the creation, according to the Psalmist's prophecy: *They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before Him, and his enemies shall lick the dust. Yea, all kings shall fall down before Him; all nations shall serve Him.* Pl. lxxii. 9, &c.

St. Peter, in his second discourse to the Jews, far from calling our Lord a *mere man*, as you do, calls Him *THE PRINCE OF LIFE*, and names Him emphatically *THE HOLY ONE*, a sacred Title, which, in the Scripture, is never given to any *mere man*, but in the old Testament is twenty nine times appropriated to *JEHOVAH, THE LORD GOD OF ISRAEL.* Act. xiv. 15.

Proceed, Sir, to St. Peter's third and last Discourse, handed down to us, and you will also find that far from intimating to his hearers that Jesus Christ is a *mere man*, he had no sooner mentioned the Saviour's adorable Name, but he makes a solemn pause, guards Cornelius, against the error into which you are fallen, and speaking of Him whom you debase to a *mere man*, cries out, *He himself is Lord of all!* *αυτος εστι παντων κυριος* Acts x. 36. Now, Sir, he who hath the title of *LORD OF ALL*, hath certainly a title higher than that of a *mere man*, *approved of God*; for he hath the title of Lord of men and angels, Lord of earth and heaven. St. PETER therefore hath already confuted your unscriptural assertion.

But let us hear the testimony of the other inspired Authors, and let us see, Sir, if they confirm your assertion better than he, whom you have quoted with so little attention. Do not they represent our Lord as the divine Son of God. (1) By his eternal generation, as the Word that was in

in the beginning with God, and was God: and (2) by his being conceived of a pure virgin (as to his human nature) by the miraculous interposition of the Holy Ghost. Thus, although he was a real man, yet he was really a *divine man*, as appears by these following Scriptures:

When the Angel *Gabriel* came to the Virgin *Mary*, to inform her that she should bear a Son, who should be THE SON OF THE HIGHEST, and Immanuel, GOD WITH US, she replied, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? The heavenly messenger replied, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the Power of the Highest shall over-shadow thee; therefore that Holy [conception] which shall be born of thee, shall be called THE SON OF GOD: Luke i. 32, &c.

Lest this capital Doctrine should stand upon the testimony of one Evangelist only, St. *Matthew* says, *Before Joseph and Mary came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. And when Joseph entertained suspicions concerning her virtue, the Angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy (espoused) wife, for that which it conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. Thus was fulfilled, that which was spoken of the Lord by the Prophet: Behold, a Virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a Son, and she shall call his name Immanuel, or God with us. Matt. i. 18, 20, 23.* Hence it appears, that, even without taking the incarnation of the Word into the account, the human nature to which the Logos condescended to unite himself, when he took upon him the form of a servant, bore a stamp of Divinity; and therefore our Lord, far from being a mere man, was in his whole complex Person fitted for divine honours by his ineffable generations, both as im-

mortal son of God, and mortal son of *David*. And if this was the case, even when he lay in the manger and hung on the cross, how much more now that he shines in the midst of his everlasting throne, where mortality is so completely swallowed up of life, and his refulgent manhood so gloriously taken up into God!

By preaching this wonderful generation of our Lord, *Philip*, the evangelist, kindled christian faith in the heart of a pious *Ethiopian*, who meditated on these words of *Isaiah*, who shall declare (or fully explain) his [the Messiah's] generation, &c. If we believe you, Sir; you are the man raised to explain this mystery. You teach that the Logos, the word made flesh, had no glory, no glorious existence with the Father before the world began: Thus, indirectly charging falsehood upon our Lord's Sacerdotal Prayer, you make an end of his eternal generation. As for his human generation you boldly cut the knot, by declaring that the Messiah was a mere man, naturally born of an honest tradesman and of *Mary* his wife. And thus you deny the Lord who bought you, both with respect to his eternal Godhead, and to the glory of his manhood.

When you have so deeply wounded our Lord's glory, you think to salve the matter over by treating the Evangelists with as little ceremony as you treat their divine Master. I have frequently avowed myself (do you say to Dr. *Horsley*) not to be a believer of the inspiration of the evangelists and apostles, as writers: I therefore hold the subject of the miraculous conception to be one, with respect to which any person is fully at liberty to think, as evidence shall appear to him, without impeachment of his faith as a christian. Thus, Sir, you are so pressed by Scripture, that honestly pulling of the mask, you
give

up the veracity or the wisdom of the sacred Writers, as incompatible with your doctrine. We thank you, for this declaration, and we look upon it as a public acknowledgment, that if *Socinus* and *Mr. Lindsey* are for you, the Evangelists and Apostles are for us. To convince you still more of it, I shall continue to try by Scripture your assertion, that the Apostles never give our Lord any higher title, than that of a man approved of God.

We have already seen what *St. Peter*, *St. Matthew* and *St. Luke* say on the subject: Let us hear *St. Mark*. Taking us to the Holy mount, with *Peter*, he shews us our Lord *transfigured*, while some beams of the divine glory, of which he had emptied himself, shine through the veil of his flesh, in so much, that his very garments become gloriously resplendent. And while the greatest Prophets, *Moses* and *Elias*, attend Him, the Father speaks from the excellent glory, or from a cloud resplendent with divine glory, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I delight, hear Him*. Mark xi. 7 and 2. Pet. ii. 17. Nor is it here so much *St. Peter* and *St. Mark*, who speak, as matter of fact, and the first of the three Witnesses in heaven: We hope therefore, Sir, that you will either recant your assertion, or shew that the Father ever gave such a testimony to *Moses* his servant, to *Abraham* his friend, to any of the men whom he hath approved of in all ages, or to *John the Baptist*, who was so great in the sight of the Lord, that among them that are-born of women, there hath not risen a greater than he, and nevertheless this greatest of men said, *There cometh after me one mightier than I, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose*: Mark i. 7.

I grant you however, Sir, that you will find in *St. Mark* some of the favourite expressions of
your

your system, *Is not this the Carpenter, the Son of Mary? the brother of James and Simon? and are not his sisters with us?* Mark vi. 3. But before you adopted such a system, should you not, Sir, have gone on to the end of the verse, and taken notice that the people, who thus speak, are those who are *offended at our Lord, those who stumble against the precious corner stone laid in Sion, even those proud, unbelieving, stubborn Jews, to whom our Lord declared it would be more tolerable for the sinners of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for them.* But if you will know farther what St. Mark's own sentiments were on the subject we consider, he will tell you, after the second Witness in Heaven, *The Son of man* (the Messiah, even whilst he appears in the form of a Servant) *is Lord also of the Sabbath*; [Supreme and divine Lawgiver, he hath power to dispense with his own law, and of consequence with the fourth commandment.] Mark ii. 28. And who hath this supreme Lordship, but the *Lord God of Sabbath, the Lord of the Sabbath* and of the heavenly hosts? Unless therefore you can prove that *Moses, Samuel, or some man approved of God* hath been called the *Lord of the Sabbath* by St. Mark, you must grant that your assertion is overthrown by that Evangelist.

St. James uses indifferently the titles of *God*, and of *LORD*, the latter of which, you yourself, Sir, will grant to be the ordinary title of *Jesus*, in the new Testament, as it is of *Jehovah*, in the old. If any man, (says that Apostles) lack wisdom, let him ask it of *God*; but let him ask *in faith*; for let not the man, who wavers, think, that he shall receive any thing of *THE LORD*: Jam. i. 5, 7. And accordingly he begins the next chapter by pointing out the Messiah, not as a *mere man*, but as the great object of *faith*, jointly with the Father. *Have not*, says he, the faith of *OUR LORD Jesus*

Jesus Christ, the Lord of GLORY, with respect of persons: Jam. ii. 1. The second LORD is not in the original, but it is properly supplied in our Translation, because it is the only word which can be grammatically supplied to compleat the sense. And JEHOVAH, THE LORD, Giver of Wisdom, Object of our Faith, and LORD OF GLORY, is certainly a title never given by the inspired Writers to any mere man, let him be ever so approved of God. St. James therefore, confutes your assertion, as well as St. Mark.

St. JUDE wrote but one short Epistle, and yet attention and candor can see a beam of our Lord's Divinity shining through the very first verse. St. James calls himself the Servant of God, and of the Lord Jesus Christ, but St. Jude, calling himself the Servant of Jesus Christ [only,] inscribes his Epistle to them, that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in [or by] Jesus Christ. Now what unprejudiced Person does not see (1) That if there is GOD THE FATHER, there must (by necessity of opposition) be also GOD THE SON: And (2) That this divine SON is the Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the Faithful are preserved; it being impossible that any one, who is not God, should preserve a countless number of men through all countries, and for hundreds of generations. See 1 Pet. i. 5.

Hence it is that St. Jude, in the fourth verse, represents it as the same capital offence, to deny the only Lord God and the Lord Jesus Christ, the

words

I consider this verse as it stands in our translation. But when I look into the original, I find, that St. Jude prophesies of certain men crept in unawares, who deny τον μονον δεσποτην θεον και κυριον ημων ιησουν χριστον, our only Lord God and Saviour Jesus Christ—or according to the best copies, which omit θεον, our only Master (of Lord) and Saviour Jesus Christ.

words only *Lord God* being put here [as in *John xvii. 3.*] to exclude from divinity, lordship and dominion; all who by nature are not God; and not to exclude our Lord Jesus Christ, who, in the very same verse, is joined to the Father, who, in the unity of the Father and of the Spirit, is *God over all*, and whom *the Father of glory hath set at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: Eph. i. 20, &c.*

That St. Jude makes it the same capital offence to speak against the Dignity of the Son, as to insult the Majesty of the Father, and that the *men creep in unawares*, against whom St. Jude prophesies, are principally the malicious opposers of our Lord's divinity, appears from the context: For St. Jude, in verse 21, and 25. considering again Jesus Christ as on the throne of the Godhead, with his Father, exhorts the christians to *keep themselves in the love of God the Father, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, unto eternal life*; Now who can read these words without wondering at the *certain men who creep in unawares*, who come into the Church of Christ, as if they would purge it from corruptions, and pour contempt upon the very divinity of the supreme Lawgiver, and Judge of the universe, and who dare tell us that the Apostles give Jesus Christ no higher title than that of a *mere man* approved of God, when they call him *THE LORD* to whose mercy we are to look for eternal life; as if a *mere man* could, in the day of God, shew us *mercy unto eternal life*!

How different is the idea which St. Jude gives us of Him, after Enoch, verse 14. *Behold THE LORD cometh with ten thousand of his saints to execute judgment*

judgment upon all, and to convince all the ungodly of their ungodly deeds, and of all the hard speeches which they have spoken against Him. Now, Sir, we Trinitarians never heard of the *Saints of Moses*, or of a mere man, but we have heard of the *Saints of God*, we have heard of that Great Being, who is called the Lord of Hosts and the *King of Saints*, because all the armies of the Saints and Angels are HIS own: And therefore we conclude that the Lord who shall come with myriads of his Saints, is the Son who will punish obstinate unbelievers for their hard speeches, not against a mere man, but against HIM who said when he was in the form of a servant, *The Son of Man* [resuming his form of God] *shall come in his glory, and all his holy angels with him, and they shall gather his Elect, &c.* Mat. xxiv. 31. and xxv. 31.

Now Sir, this LORD of glory whose are the Saints, the Angels, and the Elect, is our Lord Jesus Christ, whom St. Jude, in the last verse of his Epistle, calls [in the unity of the Father's Godhead, mentioned verse 1 and 19,] the only wise God our Saviour, to whom be glory, majesty and dominion, both now and ever!

Should you ask me, Sir, how I prove that this doxology belongs peculiarly to our Lord Jesus Christ, I reply, that St. Jude himself furnishes me with a proof; for, verse 24, speaking of this God our Saviour to whom he ascribes glory, he describes him thus: *Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, &c.* And that this description peculiarly belongs to our Lord, I prove by the following references. Speaking of himself as the good Shepherd, the keeper of the sheep, he that keeps obedient believers from falling into sin and into hell, he says, I and my

my Father are one; and explaining how he is, with the Father, this GOD SAVIOUR who keeps the Sheep from falling, he says, I give unto them eternal life, none shall pluck them out of my hand: My Father [also] who gave them me is greater than all [the powers of earth and hell] and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. John x. 28, 3.

If this equality of the Father and of the Son in KEEPING US FROM FALLING proves that St. Jude's doxology refers to our Lord, as well as to the Father; the following remark on St. Jude's words, *God our Saviour is able to present you faultless with great joy, &c.* prove it still more clearly. Is it God the Son, who will present us to the Father, or God the Father who will present us to himself? St. Paul will inform us, *You (says he) that were sometimes enemies, hath he reconciled, in the BODY OF HIS FLESH, through death to PRESENT you unblamable in his sight.* Col. i. 22. Now Sir, so surely as the Father was never manifest in the FLESH, the Prince of life, who died to PRESENT us blameless, is Jesus Christ, whom St. Jude [in union with God the Father] calls GOD OUR SAVIOUR. For it is OUR LORD, who peculiarly loved the Church, and gave himself for it, that he might cleanse it, and PRESENT it to himself without spot and blameless: It is our Lord, who, for the joy [the great joy] that was set before him, endured the cross, and will one day say (as Mediator) to the Father, *Behold, I and the children whom thou hast given me,* Compare Eph. v. 25, &c. Heb. ii. 13 and xii. 2.

From these observations it appears, that St. JUDE also gives to Christ higher titles than that of a man approved of God, since he calls Him not only Jesus our Lord Messiah, but God our Saviour. I have dwelt the longer on this Apostles testimony,

ny, because some of the men whom he describes, have endeavoured to press him into the service of Socinus; and to represent him as an opposer of our Lord's Divinity. We have not yet heard St. John and St. Paul, but as this Letter is long enough, I shall reserve their testimony for my next.

I remain, &c.

LETTER

LETTER VIII.

On the same subject.

REV. SIR,

THE sacred Writers, with whom you have already been confronted, rise with one accord against your error. Two more Apostles, St. John and St. Paul remain to be consulted; and as they have written about half of the new Testament, we may, in their writings, if any where, find your favourite Doctrine. But before we call them in as evidences, let us take a view of the question to be decided by their testimony.

This question is not whether our Lord was a man, a man approved of God, a man mediating between God and us; nor yet whether he was not inferior to the Father when he had taken upon him the form of a Seryant, and when he sustained the part of a commissioned mediator: for this we maintain as well as you; But the question is whether, as *Logos*, as the Word, he had not a divine glory with his Father before the world was: [John xvii. 5.] You boldly reply No! you suppose that the *Arians* do him too much honour, when they believe, that he had a *superangelic* nature, you think, that we *Trinitarians* are idolaters, for considering him as possessed of a divine nature; and you assert, that he was a mere man, and that the sacred writers give him no higher title than that of a man approved of God.

Now, Sir, where does St. John side herein with *Socinus* and you? Is it in his Gospel, which he begins by calling our Lord THE WORD who IN THE BEGINNING was, with God [the Father *Jude* verse 1.] and WAS GOD? Is it where he
saith,

saith, that this Logos is the Word, by which all things were made, without which nothing was made, and in which was the life and the light of men :—that this Logos was made flesh, and that he [St. John with his fellow Apostles] beheld the glory of this Logos, a glory as of THE ONLY BEGOTTEN OF THE FATHER? John i. 1, 14, and Jude 1.

I do not wonder if a Philosopher, who maintains that he has no immortal Principle, can find in these words of St. John, a demonstration that the Word, the Logos made flesh, was a mere man : but we, poor Trinitarian idolaters, who have yet immortal souls, think that this Apostle could not assert more clearly the eternal generation and divinity of the Logos : (1) His ETERNAL GENERATION, by saying, that in the beginning [when the creation began] he was with God the Father [John i. 1, 14.] as his only Son, begotten in a manner, of which the formation of Adam's soul, and the regeneration of the Godly, who, by analogy, are called Sons of God, gives us but a faint idea : And (2) His DIVINITY, by declaring, that this only begotten Son of God the Father, was not only WITH GOD IN THE BEGINNING, as MAKER OF ALL THINGS ; but that HE WAS GOD, a title which is as far above that of a mere man, as christianity is above materialism.

If St. John overthrows your error in the very first verse of his gospel, does he set it up afterwards? where? Is it where he saith, No man hath seen [God] the Father at any time ; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared Him : John i. 18? Is it where he brings in our Lord as saying, I and my FATHER are ONE ;—He that hath seen ME, hath seen THE FATHER? John x. 30, and xiv. 9.

We grant you, with St. John, that the Father is greater than the Son, when the Son is con-

sidered, not only as a man, but also as a divine Mediator; allowing you farther, that when our Lord came to *fulfil all righteousness*, to set us a pattern of all divine and human virtues, and to enforce God's commandments, the fifth of which requires human Sons to obey their human Fathers, it became Him (as a divine Son) to honour God THE FATHER, and to say publicly *My Father is greater than I*, both with respect to his Paternity, and with reference to the Order of the Three who bear record in heaven:—Nay, we maintain that our Lord, coming as a *divine Son*, to set us a pattern of voluntary subordination, liberal obedience, and filial gratitude, it highly became him to display the temper of a Son by referring all to his Father.

This he did with a dignity suitable to the Son of God, when he said; *As the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself*: John v. 26. *The living father hath sent me, and I live by the Father.*—I can [morally speaking] of mine own self, do nothing;—*What things soever the Father doth, these also doth the Son likewise.*—*I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father who sent me, &c.* Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine be done: *Sacrifices* (offered according to the law) thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared me, Then I said, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God.—Father, I have finished the work thou gavest me to do;—*Into thy hands I commend my spirit* [the human soul which I assumed together with the body thou didst prepare for me:] *I have glorified thee on the earth, and now, glorify thou me with the glory, which I had with thee before the world was.*

In all these dutiful expressions, nothing indicates, that our Lord was a mere man: on the contrary

trary, taken all together, they are strongly expressive of the humble submission, of the perfect obedience, and of the chearful dependance which become a Son, and which principally became the Son of God, manifest in the flesh. In a word, instead of finding Socinianism in these speeches of our Lord; in them, as in a glass, I see the divine character of Him, whom the Scriptures call *ὁ υἱος τοῦ θεοῦ* the proper Son of God the Father; I admire the adorable temper of a Son, who is the perfect pattern of all sons, as being *ὁ υἱος τοῦ θεοῦ* Son of God by nature, Compare Rom. viii. 32, with Jude 1, and Gal. iv. 8.

Having thus presented you, Sir, with a key to open these passages in St. John, which the enemies of our Lord's divine glory continually dwell upon, I return to that Apostle; and I ask again, where does he say that our Lord is a mere man? If you reply that it is where he brings in our Lord as saying, *Father, glorify thy Son, that thy Son may glorify thee. Thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him* (that is, every penitent believer) *And this is eternal life, that they might know thee, the only true God; and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent:* John xvii. 1, 3. Triumphant in this passage you say, If the Father be the only true God, either Jesus Christ is no God at all, or he is only a false God: But conclusive as you think this argument, if you consider it every way, you will find that it can be so retorted as to overthrow your whole system.

The only true God, you say, is the Father, mentioned in the very first verse of the Chapter. We thank you, for this concession: We have then in the true Godhead, a Father, God the Father. Now, Sir, we Trinitarians who have not yet sacrificed our rational and immortal souls to ma-

terialism, reason thus, If the only true God be a truly divine and everlasting Father, he has a truly divine and everlasting Son; for how can he be truly *God the Father* who hath not truly a *divine Son*? This inference is so obvious, that St. John whom you try to force into the service of Socinus, saith, *He that honoureth not the SON, honoureth not the FATHER—He that denieth the SON, denieth the FATHER also*; because the opposite and relative terms and natures of Father and Son necessarily suppose each other. You must therefore give up the true paternity of God the Father, or the false argument of Socinus.

“What! do you then believe in *two or three* Gods? do you break the first command of all revealed religion, which is to believe in the *unity of God*?” No, Sir; We only believe that in the unity of the Godhead there is, without any division, a mysterious and adorable Trinity which our Lord calls *The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost*: We believe with St. John (1) That *there are three who bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and (2) that these three are ONE*: 1 John v. 7. We believe that when the Father spake from the cloud on the Holy mount, and from heaven on the banks of *Jordan*, he said, *This is my beloved Son: hear Him*. We obey this first command of the Gospel; We listen when our Lord speaks; and we hear him say, *I and the Father are one*—one in our counsels and works, but especially one in our divine nature: Hence the propriety and ground of this capital Precept, *You believe in God [the Father,] believe also in ME [who am his only begotten Son.]* Now, Sir, we beg that you will not so far honour Socinus as to pour contempt upon the Declaration of the Father, the command of the Son, and the Veracity of both: And this you nevertheless do when you contend

contend for an Unity which degrades the Son of God to a mere man, and makes it an act of idolatry to believe in him, as we believe in the Father.

You and your friend Mr. Lindsey are *Jewish* Unitarians, I mean Unitarians ready to stone the Son of God for supposed blasphemy,—and Unitarians *who crucify the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open, shame*: But we, whom you pity as deluded idolaters, are *christian* Unitarians: With the Apostles we believe that in the Deity there is an eternal paternity, an eternal sonship, and an eternal procession, which answer to the profound mystery of *Father, Son and Holy Ghost*, held out in the form of baptism as the one great object of our faith: and we reverence this divine paternity, Sonship and procession, as you admire the polarity, and attraction of the load-stone, together with the impregnating effluvia which continually proceed from it, without your knowing those mysteries of the natural world, otherwise than by the testimony of other philosophers, and the experience you have had again and again, that they spoke the truth, when they testified that those mysteries were realities worthy to be believed by every lover of truth.

Your objection being answered, I return to St. John and I ask again, where does he say that our Lord was a *mere man approved of God*? Is it where he declares, that *he who honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father*, and that the Father hath committed all judgment to the Son; that all men should honour the Son as they honour the Father? John v. 23. What a finishing stroke does the Apostle and our Lord give here to *Socinianism*? How do all men honour the Father? Is it not by trusting in him, by praying to him, and by worshipping him as *Jehovah, God over all blessed for ever*? And is

he a mere man, whom St. *John*, the Son and the Father want us thus to honour? does not this one verse contain a demonstrative proof that St. *John* spake too highly of our Lord, or that *Socinus* and you trample upon the divinity of the Son, which is one and the same with the divinity of the Father, since all men must honour the Son as they honour the Father?

From St. *John's* Gospel, go to his Epistles, and you will find him still ready to assert our Lord's divinity. Beginning his first Epistle, as he did his Gospel, with an heart penetrated with a deep sense of his Master's divine greatness, he calls him *the eternal life, which was with the Father*: 1. John i. 2. That we may honour the Son as we honour the Father, he points out both unto us as the joint object of our faith: For representing fellowship with the Father and with his Son *Jesus Christ* as the soul and the end of christianity, he exhorts us equally to continue in the Son and in the Father. 1. John i. 3, and ii. 24. because it is eternal life in its progressive manifestations to know God the Father and his Son *Jesus Christ*.

It is remarkable, Sir, that in consequence of the oneness of the Father and of the Son, St. *John* uses (after our Lord) a variety of expressions entirely subversive of your error, *The Father dwelleth in me, saith Christ; I am in the Father, and the Father in me: If any man love me, I and my Father will come to him*: John xiv. 10, 11. Nay, this Apostle, who concludes his Epistle, by a charge to keep ourselves from idolatry, uses the appellations of Father, God, the Son of God, and *Jesus Christ* as partly synonymous. Take some examples. Behold, what manner of love the FATHER hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the [adopted] sons of GOD. Now are we the [adopted] sons of GOD, but we know, that when He [GOD] manifest

manifest in the flesh] *shall appear, we shall be like HIM (in his glorified humanity) 1 John iii. 1, 2.—Again, Hereby know we the love of God (manifest in the flesh) because HE (God our Saviour) laid down his life for us. 1 John iii. 16.—Yet again We have known and believed the love that God hath to us, God is love.—Herein is our love made perfect that we may have boldness in the day of judgment (or as it is expressed 1 John ii. 28.) that when He [God the Son] shall appear, we may not be ashamed before Him at his coming) because as He is (in his form of a servant, a loving, humble man) so are we in this world; 1 John iv. 16, &c. Once more: Hereby perceive we the love of God because HE [God the Son] laid down his life for us: 1 John iii. 16. From a careful comparison of these passages it is evident that St. John considers the Father and the Son, in his form of God, as so intimately one, that he joins them together as the great Object of our faith, and uses the high title of God for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, the God man who laid down his human life for us, and before whom we shall appear in the great day.*

Take another proof that St. John honours the Son, as he honours the Father. Summing up his first Epistle, he saith: *The Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding that we may know Him that is true [that we may know Him that is the only true God, the Father eternally one with his only begotten Son] And we are in Him that is true, even in [or by] his Son Jesus Christ: This is the true God and eternal life: [For the eternal Godhead resides in the Son, as truly as it does in the Father, and flows to us more immediately from the Son: who is peculiarly God our Saviour, and the fountain of our eternal life.] 1. John v. 20. Thus St. John concludes this Epistle*

tle, as he began his Gospel: Not by asserting with you that Jesus Christ is a mere man, or by refusing to give him any higher title than that of a man approved of God; but by calling him God, the true God; the living God, yea everlasting life itself. And the drift of this excellent Epistle is so evidently to hold forth the Son's and the Father's common Divinity that the sum of the whole is, *Whosoever denieth the Son, he hath not the Father: But he that acknowledgeth the Son, hath the Father also:* 1 John. ii. 23.

The same vein of Anri-Sotinian doctrine runs through St. John's second Epistle, of which we have the substance in these words: *He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there came any to you, and bring not this doctrine, [but make you believe, that committing sin is consistent with our victorious faith, or that the Father is Jehovah alone; and that the Logos, God the Word was not manifested in the flesh to take away our sins:] receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed; for he that bid- deth him God speed is a partaker of his evil deeds.* 2 John ix. 10. *For many deceivers are entered into the world who confess not that Jesus Christ [the Logos who was in the beginning with God and was God] is come in the flesh [some of whom deny his real divinity, and others his real humani- ty.] This is a deceiver and an antichrist;* 2 John verse 7. *For he is antichrist who denieth the Father and the Son: [it being impossible to deny God the Son, without denying God the Father.]* 1 John ii. 22. *Yea so perfect is the oneness of God the Father, and of his only begotten Son, that St. John gives the elect Lady this anti-Socinian bless- ing. Grace, mercy, and peace be with you [equally] from GOD THE FATHER, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, THE SON OF THE FATHER:* 2 John 3.

Another

Another proof this that there is in the Godhead, an eternal paternity inseparably connected with an eternal sonship.

St. John's last book is full of the same doctrine. The Father (if not the Son) speaks thus, *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, who is, who was, and is to come, the Almighty*: Rev. i. 8. And the Son, not thinking it a robbery to speak of himself, in the same glorious terms, says, *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the First and the Last*. Rev. i. 17. and xxii. 13. Thus the last as well as the first Chapter of the Revelation, shew that he hath higher titles than that of a man approved of God.

As the Father and the Son are honoured with the same titles, so they are represented as filling the same everlasting throne: And although the Father calls himself a jealous God, yet is he so little displeased, with the divine honours paid to the Son, that placing him at his right hand, he gives him the seat of honour in the midst of the throne, that all men and angels may (without scruple) honour the Son as they honour the Father. Rev. v. 6. Ps. cx. 1. and Acts vii. 55. Therefore every rational creature in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth is represented by St. John, as paying the same worship to the Father and the Son; and as addressing to both a doxology similar to that which concludes the Lord's Prayer; saying in the midst of the deepest prostrations, *Blessing and honour, and glory, and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever*! Rev. iv. 8, &c. and v. 12, &c. And both, in the unity of the Spirit, are adored as the same Jehovah, the same Holy, Holy, Holy One, that liveth for ever and ever, who hath created all things, and for whose pleasure they are
and

and were created, and before whose throne the Elders of the triumphant church cast their Crowns. Rev. iv. 10, 11. and v. 14.

Thus St. John, whom you think favourable to your error, not only asserts (after our Lord) that all men are to honour the Son, as they honour the Father, but testifies that all the heavenly hosts actually worship the Son, as they do the Father, so grossly mistaken are you, when you assert that our worshipping of Jesus Christ is an abominable idolatry, on account of which every true Christian is to forsake the Church of England. I wish, Sir, that by advancing such unscriptural and antichristian paradoxes, you may not finally unfit yourself for the company of those who worship God and the Lamb, and for the bliss of those who sing with St. John, *To him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever, Amen!* Rev. i. 5. Praying that this Letter may be a means of removing or shaking the prejudices you entertain against Him, who (in the unity of the Father and of the Holy Ghost) is *the true God and eternal life*, (1 John v. 7, and 20.)

I remain, &c.

LETTER

LETTER IX.

Doctor Priestly is confronted with St. Paul: and our Lord's divine glory is seen in that Apostle's Writings.

REV. SIR,

ST. Paul who, as a rigid Jew, detested the very name of idols; and who, as a zealous Christian, went through the World to make armies of idols fall before the living God, St. Paul I say, will peculiarly take care not to countenance idolatry. He wrote 13 or 14 Epistles, and, if you are not mistaken, we shall find, at least, in one of them that our Lord was a *mere man*.

But how soon does this Apostle rise against your error? In the very first Chapter of his first Epistle, he calls his Gospel indifferently *the Gospel of God and the Gospel of CHRIST*: Rom. i. 1, 16; and to let us at once into the mystery of our Lord's divine nature, he confirms St. John's doctrine of the Logos made flesh, and calls our Lord *the Son of God, made of the seed of David according to the flesh, and declared with power the Son of God, according to the spirit of holiness*, [the holy and quickening Spirit essential to his divine nature, 1 Cor. xv. 45.] *by the resurrection from the dead*: And therefore the Apostle immediately points him out as being, in the unity of the Father, the divine spring of grace and peace, saying, *Grace to you, and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ*. Rom. i. 3, 4, 7. Far from seeing in this description a *mere man*, I already perceive *ιδιον υιον*; the proper Son of God, the very Prince of life, condescending to clothe himself with our *flesh*, our mortal nature, that he

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he might make way for HIS gospel, which is the gospel of God.

When the Apostle hath thus led us to honour the Son as we honour the Father, he deplores the idolatry of the heathen, who honoured and worshipped the creature: Rom. i. 25. A strong proof this, that St. Paul had no idea of your doctrine, which sees in Christ a mere creature. On the contrary, he holds him out as the great object of our faith and confidence; saying, that God [the Father] hath set him forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, that he might be just, and the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus, [that is who relieth on Jesus for salvation.] Rom. iii. 25, 26. Now Sir, this faith, this religious reliance for pardon and eternal life, is the highest of all acts of worship, and therefore none is to be the object of it but God our Saviour: So sure then as St. Paul never called us to believe in Moses, in himself, or in any mere man, but only in Jesus; our Lord, the object of our faith, is God over all, and not a mere man as you unscripturally teach.

On our Lord's divinity rests the force of St. Paul's great incentive to divine love; God, faith he, commendeth his love towards us, in that when we were yet sinners Christ died for us: Rom. v. 8. For, if Christ be a mere man, God commended his love as much towards us by the death of Socrates, or of St. Paul, as by the death of our Lord Jesus Christ. On the same evangelical ground rests also this ravishing conclusion of the Apostle, As by one man's offence death reigned by one, MUCH MORE they who receive abundance of grace shall reign in life, by one Jesus Christ: Rom. v. 17. For if our Lord be a mere man as Adam was, why is he MUCH MORE able to save than the first man was able to destroy? But upon St. Paul's evangelical principles of sound reasoning, Christ is by so much more able to save, than Adam was
to

to destroy, by how much the only begotten and proper Son of God is greater than a Son by mere creation. For *the first Adam was [only] made a living soul, but the last Adam [is] a quickening Spirit.* 1 Cor. xv. 45.

Take another instance of St. Paul's apostolic concern for our Lord's divine glory, which you so zealously oppose. Christ had said to the woman of Samaria, Salvation is of the Jews, because he the Saviour was of *Jacob's* posterity. In like manner St. Paul speaking of the Israelites, adds *of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever.* *ὁ ὢν ἐπὶ πάντων θεὸς εὐλογητός εἰς τὰς αἰῶνας ἀμήν.* Rom. ix. 5. It was impossible to any but an inspired writer to crowd, in so few words, such a full description of our Lord's Divinity, contradistinguished from his humanity. (1) He *is* *ο ὢν* he exists essentially; Before Abraham was, says he, I AM, and therefore the name of *Jehovah*, the self-existent God, belongs to Him, as he is one with the Father and the Spirit. (2) He is not only *with* God, but he *is* God; Yea, (3) God OVER ALL, God of all men and angels, God supreme over earth and heaven: (4) God BLESSED, praised and worshipped as God; *εὐλογία*, BLESSING, being the first act of adoration, which St. John saw performed in heaven to Him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb. Rev. v. 13. Nor is this adoration (5) to end like the extraordinary honours paid to a king at his coronation; it is to last FOR EVER: And so far is St. Paul from repenting to have asserted our Lord's Divinity in so strong a manner, that he sets (6) the broad seal of his approbation to the whole description by an AMEN, which expresses both the fulness of his persuasion, and the warmth of the devotion, with which he blessed and adored our Lord.

When the Apostle hath considered the Son of God in his divine nature, lest we should lose sight of his condescending love in becoming our brother, He concludes the Epistle by shewing him in his inferior character, as a divine man by whom alone we have access unto God. *To God only wise, says he, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever !* Rom. xvi. 27. This care of the Apostle is a proof his wisdom, for having shewed us the infinite height of the ladder by which we rise to glory, he kindly shews us that the foot of it is within our reach, reminding us that this very Jesus, who, in the unity of the Father and of the Holy Spirit, is God over all, is nevertheless, in consequence of his union with our nature, a man who graciously mediates between God and us:—

And lest we should think that divine man a mere man, St. Paul, in the context, represents him again as a wonderful person, in whom, by virtue of an indissoluble union with Deity, are all the treasures of divine wisdom and power. For whereas, in the first chapter of this Epistle, he had wished the *Romans Grace and Peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ*, in the last chapter, he shews that in Christ dwells the fulness of the Godhead, and gives twice his blessing in the name of the Son only, saying, *The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all,* Rom. xvi. 20, 24, an apostolic blessing this, which upon your plan would be both absurd and wicked: (1) *Absurd*: For how can a mere man have grace enough to supply the wants of millions of millions in all ages? And (2) *Wicked*: Because it puts Christians upon believing in, and praying to Jesus Christ for the fulness of divine grace, which would be tempting them to gross idolatry if he were a mere man.

But

But so far was St. Paul from entertaining any fear in this respect that he begins his next Epistle by describing true Christians as men who are *sanctified in (or by) Christ Jesus, and who in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:—As people who wait for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall conform them unto the end, that they may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ, [elsewhere called the day of God.]* 1 Cor. i. 2, 7, 8. These words, Sir, demonstrate our Lord's Divinity, unless you can prove that all Christians, in all ages, and in every place, are to call upon a mere man, for *sanctifying and confirming grace unto the end of the world.*

But opposing St. Paul to himself, you try to set aside this striking proof of our Lord's divinity, by saying after the Apostle: *There is none other God but one.—To us [Christians] there is but one God the Father, of whom are all things: 1 Cor. viii. 4, 6.*

As you, Sir, and your brethren, perpetually deceive the simple, by affirming that our Lord's Divinity is inconsistent with these words, I shall not only rescue them out of your hands, but establish by them what you intend to destroy.

(1) What appearance is there that St. Paul, having begun his Epistle by pointing out our Lord as the Object of our adoration and prayers, would contradict himself in the middle of that very epistle? If you do not believe that he wrote by *divine inspiration*, you should at least allow that he wrote with *common-sense*.

(2) When he says, *There is none other God but one:—to us there is but one God*, he no more means to overthrow the Godhead of our Lord, which is one with the Godhead of the Father, than he means to overthrow the Godhead of the

Holy Spirit; but he evidently opposes the one Godhead of the Father, and of the Word, and of the Holy Ghost, to the multiplicity of heathenish deities, and of Potentates, who, as living images of the supreme Potentate, are sometimes called gods, even in Scripture.

(3) To be convinced that this is the true meaning of the two clauses on which you rest your contempt of our Lord's divinity, we need only consider them with the context. St. Paul speaks of eating the flesh of those beasts which had been offered in sacrifice to Idols; and he says, *We know that an Idol is nothing in the world* (is a mere vanity) *and that there is none other God but one, for though there be that are called Gods (as there be Gods many, and Lords many) Yet to us (Christians) there is but one God the Father of whom are all things, and we of Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, (the Word and Son of the Father,) by whom are all things, and we by Him.* He might have added, as he does, Ch. xii. 4. and Eph. iv. 4, and *one Holy Ghost, the Spirit of the Father, in whom are all things, and we in him.*

(4) I have observed in the last letter, that this expression *One God the Father*, far from excluding the divinity of the Son, is as consistent with it, as the idea of a King is consistent with that of a Subject: For God being eternally and infinitely perfect, if paternity belong to his essence, so does *sonship*. The eternal Father hath then a coeternal Son, his Word, who in the unity of the Spirit is the one God opposed by St. Paul to the many Idols and Gods of the Heathen. *There are three (divine subsistences) that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost and these three [not iv] are one, one Jehovah, in whose name Christians are baptized.*

(5) That

(5) That our Lord with the Holy Spirit is not excluded from the unity of the Godhead by the text, is evident to those who take notice that the Apostle hath no sooner mentioned *one God the Father*, but he mentions the Son as the *one Lord*, in the unity of the Father and of the Spirit.

(6) If you insist that this expression *εἷς Θεός* ONE God, which is applied to the Father, necessarily excludes the Son; it will follow by the same unscriptural rule, that this expression *εἷς Κυριός* ONE Lord, which is applied to the Son, necessarily excludes the Father, and thus to rob the SON of his *supreme Divinity*, you will rob the FATHER himself of his *supreme Lordship*! So true it is that unitarian *overdoing*, always ends in *undoing*; and that our Saviour spake an awful Truth, when he said, *He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father!*

(7) To be convinced that the *one God*, and the *one Lord* are not to be separated, and that while the former is viewed as the Creator, the latter is not to be looked upon as a mere creature, we have only to consider what the Apostle saith of each. He calls the Father the Being OF WHOM *are all things, and we in Him*: And he assures us that the Son is the Being, BY WHOM *are all things, and we by Him*. Now if ALL things are by the Son, he is prior to all the Creatures that have been created, nay he is the Creator of them all, and therefore you endeavour to substitute an absurd tenet to the second article of the Christian faith, when you teach that he is a mere man, who had no existence till he was born of the Virgin. Thus the very Scriptures, by which you attack our Lord's Divinity, when they are candidly considered with the context, and the tenor of the Bible, strongly confirm what you rashly deny:

deny: and St. Paul does not contradict himself when he exhorts the *Corinthians* to *flee from Idolatry*, and to *call upon the Name of the one Lord, by whom all things were made.*

Nor will it avail to object that St. Paul writes to these very *Corinthians*, that as the head of the woman is the man, so the head of Christ is God: 1 Cor. xi. 3. For we, who believe the Divinity of our Lord as it is set forth in the Scripture and in the *Nicene Creed*, grant that as *Eve* was subordinate to *Adam*, so the Son is subordinate to the Father: But, at the same time, we assert, that as *Eve*, notwithstanding her subordination, was truly of one nature with *Adam*, the Son of God, notwithstanding his subordination to the Father, is of one nature with Him also. Thus this second objection, when candidly weighed, beomes another proof of our Lord's Divinity, especially if we consider what St. Paul says in the next Chapter.

Speaking to the *Corinthians* of the *Idols* which they once worshipped, he first opposes to those dumb *Idols*, Jesus Christ the *Word made flesh*, and observes that *no man can say* (with a full and lively conviction) *that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost*: 1 Cor. xii. 2, 3. And in the three next verses the Apostle holding out the Doctrine of the Trinity, says (1) *There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit*: (2) *There are differences of administrations, but the same Lord*: (3) *There are diversities of operations, but the same God*: And that the Spirit and the Lord are ineffably one with Him, whom St. Paul calls the same God, I prove by the context. God, saith he, hath set some in the church as *Apostles, teachers, &c.* God hath endued some with *Gifts of healing and diversities of tongues*: Now, He who peculiarly sets some to be *Apostles*, is the Lord Jesus, who called the

the twelve Apostles and St. Paul, And He who peculiarly imparts gifts, whether of utterance, of tongues, or of healing, is the same divine spirit whose unity is opposed to the diversity of his operations.

If you deny that God, who *hath set some in the Church to be Apostles*, is peculiarly Jesus Christ, the same Lord who presides over the *differences of administrations*; and if you will still assert that the Apostles never give to our Saviour any higher title than that of a man approved of God, I once more prove the contrary, by reminding you, that St. Paul calls the Church some times *the Church of God* and some times *the Church of CHRIST*; and that, speaking to the clergy of Ephesus he exhorts them to *feed the Church of God, which HE (God) hath purchased with his own blood*: Act. xx. 28. Now, Sir, God who hath thus purchased the Church is peculiarly God the Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who in the unity of the Father and of the Spirit, is *the same one God*, whom bible-christians worship in Trinity, because *of Him, and THROUGH Him, and TO Him are all things*: *To whom be glory for ever, Amen.* Rom. xi. 36.

If you ask, how can St. Paul assert the Divinity of Christ, when he writes to the *Corinthians* that Christ is the *image of God*? Is there no difference between God and his image? Will you worship God's image as if it were God himself? I reply, that there is an *imperfect* image, which expresses only a part of the external form of its original, and a *perfect* image which expresses its whole nature, in a perfectly adequate and living manner. Thus some four footed beasts bear a resemblance to men in some things; but a Son who looks, thinks, speaks, and acts like his Father is a perfect image. Adam was an image of God in the first sense, and our Lord

Lord in the second sense. That Christ is this living and perfect image of the Father, I prove, (1) By his own words, He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father, and (2) By these words of the Apostle, which follow the text, on which the objection rests; God [the Spirit, by the light of the gospel, and by the light of faith] hath shined in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God [the Father] shining in the face of Jesus Christ, who is the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express Image of his Person: 2 Cor. iv. 6. and Heb. i. 3. And our Lord's being such an Image of God, does not any more cut him off from divinity, than a human son's being the express image of his Father deprives him of the human nature. Therefore, this objection also affords us a new proof of our Lord's divinity.

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LETTERS

L E T T E R S
TO THE
REV. MR. W E S L E Y,

O N T H E

Want of Common Sense in the *New Testament*
Writers,

If supposed to hold the
Doctrine of CHRIST'S mere
Humanity.

By JOSEPH BENSON.



L E T T E R S

T O T H E

REV. MR. W E S L E Y*,

L E T T E R I,

REV. SIR,

TH E Rev. Mr. *Fletcher*, whose unfinished Letters, at your desire, are laid before the public in the preceeding pages in a very imperfect state, has just observed to Dr. *Priestley*, that if he will not allow St. *Paul* wrote by inspiration, he ought at least to allow he wrote with common sense. And most professors of Christianity will suppose, that if Mr. *Fletcher* had extended the observation so as to include the other sacred writers, his demand would not have been unreasonable. They will be of opinion that the Doctor ought
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* Though the aged and truly Reverend Minister of Christ, to whom these Letters are addressed is now no more, yet as they were written and presented to him many months before his death, it is judged best to give them to the public in their original form.

to allow they *all* wrote with *common sense*. And yet to desire him to allow this is to desire him to give up his favourite doctrine of Christ's mere humanity. For only let this doctrine, to say nothing of other points, be supposed to have been held by these holy writers, especially by the Penmen of the New Testament, and let their writings be read under that supposition, and I will be bold to affirm that any person, who has himself common sense, will pronounce that in a multitude of instances, the Apostles and Evangelists wrote without it. And to this test one may venture to submit the matter in dispute between Dr. Priestley and his Antagonists.

The sacred writers, he affirms, considered our Lord in no other character than that of a *mere man*. Well Sir, let us for the present take this for granted, and let us make experiment how those passages of their writings which relate to Christ, read according to this hypothesis. If they appear to contain common sense, we will allow he has the truth on his side: but if not, methinks it would be no unreasonable demand to require him to own himself in an error. I begin with St. Paul, whose Epistles are now under consideration, but shall pass slightly over the Epistle to the *Romans*, and the first to the *Corinthians*, because Mr. Fletcher has already reviewed them. I shall however refer to a few passages. From the others I shall quote more largely.

In the beginning of the Epistle to the *Romans*, according to his doctrine, we must understand the Apostle as follows.—

Chap. i. 1. 'Paul a servant of Jesus Christ,' that is, a servant of a *mere man*, 'called to be an Apostle (not of *men*, as he informs the *Galatians*, Chap. i. 1, neither by *man*, but by Jesus Christ, a *mere man*! and God the Father who raised

raised him from the dead) separated unto the Gospel of God,—concerning his Son *Jesus Christ*, our Lord, a mere man made of the seed of *David* according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead, by whom, though a mere man, we have received grace and Apostleship;—among whom are ye also, the called of *Jesus Christ*,—that is, the called of a mere man, once indeed on earth, but now confined to heaven, and whom therefore ye *Romans* never saw, nor heard, nor could have any access to, or intercourse with,—To all that be at *Rome*,—Grace be unto you, and peace from God our Father, the self-existent, independant, supreme and everlasting *Jehovah*, and from the Lord *Jesus Christ*, a mere man, who had no existence till about forty or fifty years ago, but who, nevertheless, is the source and fountain, the Author and giver of grace and peace, conjointly with the supreme God!

Now, Sir, would any man, who believed the mere humanity of Christ, have expressed himself in this absurd manner? would he have spoken of being called to be an Apostle, not of man, neither by man, but by *Jesus Christ*, if he had believed *Jesus Christ* to be no more than a man? would he, in mentioning his being of the seed of *David*, have added the words, according to the flesh, thereby manifestly limiting the sense, and intimating that Christ had a nature which was not from *David*? Would he have spoken of receiving *Grace* and *Apostleship*, through this mere man, and have looked up to him, in conjunction with the eternal God, for *grace* and *peace*, to be conferred upon the churches to which he ministered? I think, dear Sir, the Doctor himself would hardly affirm it: but if he would

affirm it, then I ask why his own practice and that of his brethren is so very different from this Apostolic pattern? Why do they never express themselves in any such manner as this, either in their prayers or sermons, nor apply to *Christ* in union with his Father, for *grace* or *peace*, or any other blessing?

I shall give another instance out of the fifth Chap. 'When we were yet without strength, in due time *Christ*, a *mere man*, says the Doctor, 'died for the ungodly.—God commended his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, *Christ*, a *mere man*! 'died for us,' viz. *one mere man* for the *whole human race*! 'Much more, then, being now justified by his blood,'—the blood of *one mere man*! 'we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if when we were enemies, we were reconciled unto God' many millions as we are! 'by the death of his Son,' viz. the death of *one mere man*! 'much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved (from everlasting damnation) by his life,' the life of the same *mere man*! 'If by one man's offence, death reigned by one *much more* they who receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one *Jesus Christ*.'

Pass we on to the eighth Chap. 'There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them that are in *Christ Jesus*,' that is, that are in a *mere man*! —'For the law of the spirit of life in *Christ Jesus*.'—that is, the law of the spirit of life in a *mere man*! 'hath made me free from the law of sin and death.—For what the Law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh—God hath done, sending his own (*idion proper*) Son in the likeness of sinful flesh,' that is, if Dr. *Priestley* by right, causing a *mere man* to be born!—'and by a sacrifice for sin (the Doctor says, by dying a martyr,

'a martyr, merely, to confirm the truth) con-
 demned sin in the flesh.—Verse 8, Ye are not
 'in the flesh, but in the spirit, if so be the Spirit
 'of God dwell in you:—now if any man have
 'not the Spirit of Christ,' that is, the Spirit of
 a *mere man*! 'he is none of his.—But if Christ
 'be in you'—viz. if a *mere man*, crucified in Judea
 1700 years ago, and now in heaven, be in you,
 —'the body indeed is dead, (is mortal) because
 'of sin but the spirit is life, (is immortal) be-
 'cause of righteousness.—And he that spared
 'not his own Son,' that spared not one *mere*
man! 'but delivered him up for us all; how
 'shall he not with him, also, freely give us all
 'things;—that is, on the Doctor's principles, if
 he delivered *one mere man* to die a martyr to con-
 firm the truth of the Gospel, how shall he not,
 with him, deliver *millions of men* from everlast-
 ing damnation, and put them in possession of
 eternal salvation! The Apostle proceeds 'Who
 'shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?
 'It is God that justifieth. Who is he that con-
 demneth? It is Christ, a *mere man*! 'that died:
 'yea rather that is risen again: who is even at the
 'right hand of God, who also maketh intercel-
 sion for us. Who shall separate us from the
 'love of Christ?' the love of a *mere man*! 'shall
 'tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or fa-
 'mine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it
 'is written for thy sake *mere man* though thou
 art! 'we are killed all the day, we are appoint-
 ed as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these
 'things, we are more than conquerors through
 'him,' that is, through a *mere man*! 'that hath
 'loved us.'—strange language this, from the
 mouth of a Scholar, a Christian, and an Apostle!
 'Nay, who can reconcile it with common
 'sense?'

But to proceed still more irreconcilable therewith, is the language of the same Apostle in the two next Chapters. 'I say the truth in Christ; that is, in a *mere man*, by whom I thus swear, and to whom I thus appeal, though as a *mere man*, now in heaven, he certainly cannot know my heart, nor be a witness in any such matter, however, 'I lie not, my conscience also bearing me 'witness in the Holy Ghost, that I have great 'heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart.— 'for my brethren—my kinsmen according to the 'flesh—of whom as *concerning the flesh* Christ 'came.' Here again one might enquire what ideas the Apostle, still speaking, it seems, of a *mere man*, could annex to the words, *as concerning the flesh*: surely if Christ be a *mere man*, his whole person was from the *Jews*, as much as the person of St. Paul himself. And would it not be absurd, if speaking of that Apostle's progenitors and his descent from them, one were to express one's self in a similar manner, and say, *of whom as concerning the flesh*, St. Paul came? Those indeed, who believe the soul to be inspired immediately from God, and not derived from our Parents, may suppose that the phraseology, though *unusual*, and perhaps *unprecedented* when applied to a *mere man*, is, however, not quite improper: but the Doctor cannot avail himself of any such distinction between *soul* and *body*, for he teaches that man has no soul, distinct from his body, and that even *Jesus Christ* had none. On his principles, therefore, the expression is doubly absurd. But what shall we say of the following clause, *WHO IS OVER ALL, GOD BLESSED FOR EVER*? How many absurdities, on the Doctor's hypothesis, are wrapped up in this half sentence? To say that a *mere man* is *OVER ALL*, to term him *GOD*, to affirm that he is *BLESSED*, and that *FOR EVER*!

surely

surely reason and common sense could no more have an hand in dictating this than the spirit of inspiration!

And what has common sense to do with the following passage, which we read in the next Chapter. *Say not in thine heart who shall ascend into heaven, that is to bring Christ from above? or who shall descend into the deep, that is, to bring him back from the dead?*—For if he be a mere man, who had no existence, till begotten by Joseph, and conceived in the womb of Mary, why does the Apostle speak of *bringing him down from above?*—Surely if the latter clause, *who shall descend into the deep* (that is into the grave, or into the state of the dead) *to bring him back from the dead*, would imply an absurd enquiry, if he never had been *in the grave, or in the state of the dead*: so the former clause proposes a question equally ridiculous, if Jesus Christ, before his appearing among us, never had been above.

The Apostle goes on, according to the Socinian principles in the same strain of absurdity, verse 11. 'The Scripture saith, whosoever believeth *'on him'* a mere man though he be *'shall not be ashamed: for the same Lord over all'*, though but a man! *'is rich unto all that call upon him:—for whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord, shall be saved.* How then shall *'they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him' the mere man!* *'of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher, and how shall they preach except they be sent?'*

There are sundry other passages in the remaining Chapters of this Epistle, which, I am persuaded,

* In proof that this is to be understood of Christ, see VINDICATION, Part 1st p. 161, and Part 2d p. 30.

suaded, no person that believed the doctrine of
 Christ's *mere humanity*, and was possessed of com-
 mon sense, could have dictated or written. The
 following are among the most remarkable. Chap.
 xi. 26. 'The Deliverer (a *mere man*) shall come
 'out of Zion, and (*mere man as he is*) shall turn
 'away iniquity from *Jacob*.—Chap. xiv. 6. He
 'that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the
 'Lord, (*viz. unto a mere man!*)—and he that re-
 'gardeth not the day, to the Lord (the same *mere*
 '*man*) he doth not regard it. He that eateth,
 'eateth to the Lord, (a *mere man!*) and he that
 'eateth not, to the Lord, (the same *mere man*)
 'he eateth not. For none of us (*real Christians*)
 'liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself,
 'for whether we live, we live unto the Lord
 '(that is unto a *mere man!*) or whether we die,
 'we die unto the Lord, (the same *mere man*)
 'whether living or dying, therefore we are the
 'Lord's (that is we are the property of a *mere*
 '*man!*) For to this end Christ both died, and
 'rose, and liveth; that (though a *mere man!*)
 'he might be Lord both of the dead and
 'living!—For we shall all stand before the
 'judgment seat of Christ, (the judgment seat of
 'a *mere man!*) For it is written as I live, saith
 'the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and
 'every tongue shall confess to God. So then
 'every one of us shall give an account of himself
 'to God.—I know and am persuaded by the Lord
 'Jesus (a *mere man!*) that there is nothing un-
 'clean of itself.—For the kingdom of God is not
 'meat and drink, but righteousness, peace and
 'joy in the Holy Ghost. He that in these things
 'serveth Christ, (that is, serveth a *mere man!*) is
 'acceptable to God.

'Chap. xv. 7. Receive ye one another, as
 'Christ also (a *mere man!*) hath received us to
 'the

' the glory of God. Verse 12, *Esaïas* saith there
 ' shall be a *ROOT of Jesse*, (viz. a *mere man*, not
 ' born till many hundred years after *Jesse*, and yet
 ' the root from which *Jesse sprung!*) and he that
 ' shall rise to reign over the *Gentiles*, in him;
 ' (though a *mere man*, and though it be written,
 ' Curfed is the man that trusteth in man;—yet in
 ' HIM, I say) shall the *Gentiles* TRUST!—I will
 ' not dare (verse 18,) to speak of those things
 ' which Christ, (a *mere man*) hath not wrought by
 ' me to make the *Gentiles* obedient by word and
 ' deed,—through mighty signs and wonders, by
 ' the power of the Spirit of God, so that from
 ' *Jerusalem* and round about unto *Illyricum*, I
 ' have fully preached the Gospel of Christ.—Now.
 ' I beseech you brethren, for the Lord Jesus
 ' Christ's sake (that is for the sake of a *mere man!*)
 ' and for the love of the Spirit that ye strive
 ' together with me in your prayers to God for
 ' me.—

' Chap. xvi. 3. Great *Priscilla* and *Aquila*,
 ' my helpers in Christ Jesus, (that is, in a *mere*
 ' *man!*)—Salute my well-beloved *Epenetus*, who
 ' is the first fruits of *Achaia* unto Christ (a *mere*
 ' *man!*) Salute *Andronicus* and *Junius* my kins-
 ' men and my fellow prisoners,—who were in
 ' Christ (the *mere man*) before me. Salute *Ur-*
 ' *bane*, our helper in Christ (who you know, is
 ' a *mere man.*) The Churches of Christ, (that is
 ' the Churches of a *mere man!*) salute you. Mark
 ' them that cause divisions, for they that arosuch,
 ' serve not our Lord Jesus Christ (that is serve
 ' not a *mere man!*) but their own belly. The
 ' grace of (this *mere man*) our Lord Jesus Christ
 ' be with you! Amen! (I say again, verse 24.)
 ' The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, (the same
 ' *mere man!*) be with you all!

These

These, Rev. Sir, are a few of the many passages in the Epistle to the *Romans*, relating to Christ, which when opened with Dr. Priestly's key, and interpreted according to his doctrine, appear to be so absurd, that I think, no person pretending to common sense would have written them. And as a proof, that the Doctor and his brethren consider them as absurd, or at least incompatible with their scheme, they are rarely observed to use such language either from the pulpit or the press—*Serving Christ, Preaching Christ, Being in Christ, The Spirit of Christ, The grace of Christ; Christ made of the seed of David according to the flesh; sent in the likeness of sinful flesh; Christ dying for us, reconciling us to God by his death,—giving us redemption in his blood,—being the end of the Law for righteousness, &c. &c.* are expressions seldom if ever heard from their pulpits, or read in their books. And no wonder; for they are expressions which but ill agree with their doctrine of Christ's mere humanity. They are like the head of gold, and breast of silver, in *Nebuchadnezar's* image, joined with feet and toes of iron and clay.

I am

Rev. Sir,

Your's affectionately, in

Christ Jesus, the Word

made flesh,

JOSEPH BENSON.

LETTER

LETTER II.

REV. SIR,

IN the last Letter we reviewed sundry passages quoted from the Epistle to the *Romans*, and found, I think, that on the supposition of the Author's holding the doctrine of Christ's *mere humanity*, he paid little regard, I will not say to *divine inspiration*, or to *conclusive reasoning*, but even to *common sense* in writing that Epistle. I now proceed to the 1st. Epistle to the *Corinthians*, the very inscription of which, and benediction pronounced immediately after, demonstrate, either that the *Socinian* doctrine is false, or that St. Paul wrote, to say the least, very absurdly.

'Paul, an Apostle of Jesus Christ,—(that is an
'Apostle of a *mere man*!)—unto the church of
'God which is at *Corinth*; to them that are sanc-
'tified in Christ Jesus (viz. sanctified in a *mere*
'*man*!) called to be saints, with all that in
'every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ
'our Lord, both their's and our's—(that is, call
'upon the name of a *mere man*!) Grace to you,
'and peace from God our Father, and from the
'Lord Jesus Christ,'—who though no more than
a man is able, conjointly with the self-existent
Jehovah, to confer grace and peace upon all the
churches.

'I thank my God, (proceeds he, verse 4) always
'on your behalf, for the grace of God which is
given you by Christ Jesus (that is by a *mere*
'*man*!) that in every thing ye are *enriched by*
'him (a *mere man* though he be!) in all utterance,
'and in all knowledge, even as the testimony of
'Christ (this *mere man*) was confirmed among
'you, so that ye came behind in no gift, waiting
'for

‘ for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, who
 ‘ (though he be a *mere man*) shall confirm you
 ‘ unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the
 ‘ day of (the same *mere man*) our Lord Jesus
 ‘ Christ. God is faithful by whom ye were call-
 ‘ ed into the fellowship of his son Jesus Christ
 ‘ our Lord (I mean the fellowship of a *mere*
 ‘ man !)

Now, what a group of absurdities have we in these few verses ! An Apostle of a *mere man* ! Sanctified in a *mere man* ? Calling upon the name of a *mere man* ! Deriving *grace* and *peace* from a *mere man* ! Enriched by a *mere man*, in all utterance and in all knowledge ! Confirmed unto the end by a *mere man* ! Waiting continually for the coming of a *mere man* ! Surely this kind of language favours more of lunacy than of a sound mind, and betrays as great a want of *reason* or *common sense*, as of learning or inspiration. And yet, one can hardly open any where in this or in the other Epistles of this Apostle, but, on the supposition of his being an Unitarian in the sense of Dr. Priestley and Socinus, one meets with absurdities equally numerous and glaring. Thus in the verses which immediately follow.

‘ Now I beseech you brethren, by the name of
 ‘ our Lord Jesus Christ, (viz. the name of a *mere*
 ‘ man !) that ye all speak the same thing.—Was
 ‘ Paul, (a *mere man*) crucified for you ? or were
 ‘ ye baptized into the name of Paul ? I thank
 ‘ God that I baptized none of you but Crispus
 ‘ and Caius, lest any should say that I (a *mere*
 ‘ man !) baptized in my own name, (the name of
 ‘ a *mere man*.) For Christ (another *mere man* !)
 ‘ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the
 ‘ Gospel, not with wisdom of speech, lest the
 ‘ cross of Christ (that is, the cross of a *mere man* !)
 ‘ should be made of none effect. For the doctrine
 ‘ of

‘ of the cross is indeed to them that perish foolishness; but to us who are saved, it is the power of God.—Verse 23. We preach Christ (a mere man!) crucified, unto the *Jews* a stumbling block, and unto the *Greeks* foolishness, but unto them who are called, Christ, (the same mere man) the wisdom of God, and the power of God!—Of him are ye in Christ Jesus (viz. in a mere man) who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption.’—A mere man, the wisdom of God and the power of God! Yea wisdom and righteousness, that is, the source and author, of wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption to all that believe! Strange doctrine this indeed, and very incredible!

Thus again in the next Chap. ‘ I determined not to know any thing among you but Jesus Christ (that is I determined not to know any thing but a mere man!) and him crucified.—We speak the wisdom of God in a mystery which none of the Princes of this world knew, for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory,—that is, a mere man!

Again Chap. iii. 11. ‘ Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ,’ a mere man: that is, a mere man is the one foundation of the whole church, with all its doctrines, privileges and duties! All believers in all nations and ages, are built upon a mere man! And Chap. 5. this doctrine supposes the Apostle to speak as follows. ‘ In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, (that is, in the name of a mere man,) when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ (viz. the power of a mere man!)—to deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.’ Will Dr. Priestley,

or any of the Socinians tell us how the power of a mere man, confined in the third heaven, could be exerted and felt on earth, and that in thousands and myriads of congregations at the same time? And will they inform us how sinners of every description could be washed (as the Apostle expresses it in the 6th Chapter) sanctified and justified in the name of this mere man?

Pass we on to the 7th. Chapter 'Unto the married I command, yet not I (a mere man, as you know I am) but the Lord, (another and a greater mere man.) Let not the wife depart from her husband.—But to the rest speak I (a mere man) and not the Lord (particularly, the other and greater mere man.) verse 22, He that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's (that mere man's) freeman.—Likewise also, he that is called, being free, is Christ's (the same mere man's) servant.—Ye are bought with a price, be not ye the servants of men.—Howbeit, ye may be the servants of Christ, who himself is but a man!

Now how ridiculous is this language! How unworthy of the lips I will not say of an inspired Apostle, enlightened with divine wisdom, but of any rational creature, however illiterate and uninformed! And yet this and such like language every advocate for the mere humanity of Christ, who acknowledges the authenticity of these Epistles, and supposes their author to have been an Unitarian, puts into the mouth of the Apostle; nay, and makes him utter it almost with every breath, even as often as he has occasion to speak of his Master, which, it is well known, is very frequently.

The Socinians glory much in the 6th. verse of the next Chapter, because the Apostle there asserts, with great plainness, the unity of God, but even

even that passage affords a striking instance of the absurd and ridiculous doctrine I mention. For if he affirm that, *To us there is but ONE God the Father, OF WHOM ARE ALL THINGS*, a truth we should be sorry to disbelieve or deny, persuaded as we are, that he is what his name imports, the *Father* of all, even of his beloved Son, who is his offspring; if (I say) he affirm this, he affirms with equal plainness that there is *ONE LORD JESUS CHRIST BY WHOM ARE ALL THINGS*: and how *all things* could be by a mere man, who had no existence till they had been made and preserved at least 4000 years, it may perhaps puzzle even Dr. *Priestley* to shew. Nor, have we far to read before we find another proof of the absurdity of supposing St. *Paul* to hold the doctrine of Christ's mere humanity. Verse 12, he says, 'When ye sin so against the brethren and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ';—that is, according to this hypothesis, "When ye sin against mere man, ye also sin against a mere man!" To this mere man, as the *Socinians* think him, the Apostle declares himself, in the next Chapter, to be under the law, and Chap. 10. affirms the *Israelites* tempted him in the Wilderness, that is, if the *Socinians* be right, tempted him 2000 years before he existed. And while the ungodly among them thus rebelled and vexed the holy Spirit of their *Lawgiver*, and their Judge, the faithful applied to him as their Saviour, and received salvation from him, for 'they drank of that spiritual rock that followed them, and that rock was Christ,' the rock of ages, and the fountain of living waters to his Church, and yet, according to Dr. *Priestley*, a mere man!

If it seem strange to us that persons of sense and learning should patronize a doctrine which fathers such nonsense upon an inspired Apostle,

our wonder will in some measure cease if we pass on to the 12th Chapter of this Epistle. There the Apostle both gives us the true reason why men embrace the *Socinian* hypothesis, and furnishes us with a striking example of the absurdity of attempting to reconcile it with his doctrine. 'I give you to understand (says he) that no man, speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus *accursed*, and that no man can say that Jesus is *the Lord*, but by the Holy Ghost.' They have not received the Holy Ghost: They are not enlightened by that divine Spirit: he has not taken of the things of Jesus, and shewn unto them, has not revealed Christ to them, and therefore they do not, in the true and scriptural sense, call Jesus *LORD*, but degrade him into a *mere man*. The Apostle goes on, 'Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit' from whom they proceed, 'and there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord,' the same *mere man*, says *Socinus*, that appoints them all, 'and there are diversities of operations, but the same God, who worketh all in all.' In other words, according to the *Socinian* doctrine, all the gifts, offices and effects produced in the church of Christ, are from the Holy Ghost, from a *mere man*, and from the *self-existent Jehovah*!

Permit me, Rev. Sir, to refer you to a few more passages of this Epistle, as instances of the absurdity of supposing the Apostle to have held *Dr. Priestley's* sentiments concerning the mere humanity of Christ. Chap. xv. 45. We read, 'The first *Adam* was made a *living soul*, the last *Adam* is a *quickening spirit*,' that is, according to the Doctor, a *mere man* is a QUICKENING SPIRIT! 'The first man was from the earth, *earthly*, the second man is the *Lord from heaven*!' That is, a *mere man* descended from *Joseph* and *Mary*, is the

the LORD FROM HEAVEN!—‘I protest by your
 ‘rejoicing, which I also have in Christ Jesus (a
 ‘mere man) I die daily.—Thanks be to God who
 ‘giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus
 ‘Christ,—(that is through a mere man!) There-
 ‘fore be ye steadfast, and immovable, always a-
 ‘bounding in the work of the Lord, (viz. the
 ‘work of a mere man!) for as much as ye know
 ‘that your labour shall not be in vain in the
 ‘Lord, (the same mere man!)—Chap. xvi. 21,
 ‘The salutation of me Paul with my own hand.
 ‘If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ
 ‘(that is, love not a mere man!) let him be ana-
 ‘thema, (let him be accursed) Maranatha (that is,
 ‘the Lord, the same mere man cometh.) The
 ‘grace of our Lord Jesus Christ: (viz. the grace
 ‘of a mere man!) be with you. My love be with
 ‘you all in Christ Jesus’ (the same mere man!)

You see, Dear Sir, the 1st. Epistle to the Cor.
 when interpreted according to the Socinian doc-
 trine, no more appears to have been written with
 common sense, than the Epistle to the Romans.
 Nay, if Jesus Christ be a mere man, some parts
 of it are impious, as well as absurd. It is inscribed
 to those that call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,
 that is, if Jesus Christ be no more than a man,
 it is inscribed to Idolaters. And both that and
 many other passages of it manifestly counte-
 nance and encourage Idolatry. To talk of grace
 and peace being derived from the Lord Jesus, as
 well as from God the Father, and to ask grace of
 him for the Churches:—To speak of being crick-
 ed by him in all utterance, and in all knowledge,
 of being confirmed by him to the end, and called
 into his fellowship: of preaching him, the wisdom
 and power of God,—made of God unto us wis-
 dom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption
 M 3

tion; of being determined to *know nothing but him*:—To call him the LORD OF GLORY, even that Lord BY WHOM ARE ALL THINGS, and represent him as the *only foundation* that is or can be laid;—as the *Lord that shall come* and bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the heart:—To speak of the power of this person being with them that are gathered together, delivering an offender to *Satan*:—To hold him forth as our *Passover* crucified for us, and *dying for our sins*, according to the Scriptures:—To speak of our being *washed, justified and sanctified in his name*;—of our being his members joined to him, in one spirit, and not *our own* but *his*, bought with a price:—To term him THE LORD almost in every breath, and that *eminently and absolutely* without any, the least, restriction or limitation; and represent himself and all the Apostles, nay and all Christians and Ministers all the world over, as his *servants*: To speak of his ordaining laws for his church, and of his followers being *under the law* to him:—To talk of *sinning against him, tempting him, and provoking him to jealousy*, and to pronounce those *accursed* that do not love him:—Surely this is not only absurd, but even pernicious doctrine, if he be no more than a man.

Equally pernicious as well as absurd, are sundry passages of his second Epistle to the same people. He begins it, as he had done the former, by styling himself an *Apostle of Jesus Christ*, that is, according to the Socinian doctrine, an Apostle of a *mere man*; and verse 2d. he asks grace and peace of him, though a mere man, as well as of the supreme and everlasting Father!—Verse 5th. he mentions their *consolations* as *abounding through him*, and Chap. ii. 14, speaks of their *triumphing in him*, and being
unto

unto God a sweet savour in him, in them that are saved, and in them that perish.—Chap. i. 19. He calls him that *Son of God* whom he, *Sylvanus* and *Timotheus* had preached, and declares that he was not yea and nay, but that all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him *Amen*. And Chap. iv. 5, he says, ‘We preach not ourselves; but Christ Jesus the Lord,’—that is, according to this doctrine, we preach not *mere men*, but we preach a *mere man*! and ourselves your servants for Jesus’s sake, (viz. for the sake of a *mere man*!) for God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face, or person, of Jesus Christ, (that is, the face or person of a *mere man*!) Verse 11, We who live are always delivered unto death for *Jesus sake*, (viz. for the sake of a *mere man*!) that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.—Chap. v. 6, While we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord (that is absent from a *mere man*! Phil. i. 21.)—We are willing to be absent from the body, and present with the Lord (the same *mere man*!)—We labour, whether present or absent, to be accepted of him, (viz. of Christ the *mere man*! as the next words shew) for we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ,—(the judgment seat of a *mere man*!) that every one may receive according to the deeds done in the body.—Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord (the terror of a *mere man*!) we persuade men.—For the love of Christ (the love of a *mere man*!) constraineth us, while we thus judge, that if one (*mere man*!) died for all, then are all dead, and that he died for all, that they who
‘live

'live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him (the *mere man*!) that died for them, and rose again.' All mankind, therefore, being redeemed by his death, are, it seems, under an indispensable obligation of living in obedience to the will, and of being devoted to the glory of this one *mere man*! Nay, and the Apostles themselves are but Ambassadors for Christ, (that is, Ambassadors for a *mere man*.—as though God, adds he, did 'beseech you by us, 'we pray you in Christ's stead, (the stead of a *mere man*!) be ye reconciled to God. For he hath 'made him (though but one *mere man*!) a sin-offering for us (*many millions of mere men*!) that we 'might be the righteousness of God (might be justified and made righteous by God) in him.' How all true believers should be justified and made righteous through *one mere man*, is surely, to say the least, not easy to conceive.

—Proceed we to the 8th Chapter, 'Ye know the 'the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, how that 'though he was *rich*, for our sakes he became 'poor, that we through his poverty might be 'made *rich*.' Will Doctor *Priestley* inform us when and how Christ was *rich*, on his hypothesis, and *when*, and in what sense he became poor? And will he tell us how, on the supposition of his being a *mere man*, he can act the part of a spiritual husband, to all the faithful in every nation and age, guiding, protecting, and comforting them, nay, and supplying all their wants? 'I have espoused you (*many millions as ye 'are*) to *one husband* (says the Apostle, Chap. xi. '2.) that I may present you a chaste virgin to 'Christ!—The Apostle goes on, 'But I fear lest 'your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.—For if he that cometh 'preach

‘ preach another Jesus (another *mere man*!) whom
 ‘ we have not preached, or if ye receive another
 ‘ spirit (from that *mere man*) which ye have not
 ‘ received, ye might well bear with him.’

Above all I would recommend the paragraph that follows, to the consideration of those who view Christ as a mere man, and therefore judge it would be idolatry, to worship him. Chap. xii. 7, Speaking of his thorn in the flesh, he says, ‘ For this thing I besought the Lord (that
 ‘ is I besought a *mere man*! see verse 9th.) thrice
 ‘ that it might depart from me, and he said unto
 ‘ me, My grace (though I am but a *mere man*!)
 ‘ is sufficient for thee, for my strength (*mere
 ‘ man as I am!*) is made perfect (is perfectly
 ‘ displayed) in weakness! Most gladly therefore
 ‘ will I glory in my infirmities, that the power
 ‘ of Christ (the power of a *mere man*!) may rest
 ‘ upon me. Therefore, I take pleasure in infir-
 ‘ mities, in reproaches, &c. for Christ’s sake
 ‘ (that is, for the sake of a *mere man*!) for
 ‘ when I am weak, then (through the help of
 ‘ this *mere man*!) I am strong!’ This surely
 is ridiculous in the extreme! And the 3, 5,
 and 13 verses of Chapter xii. are little better. ‘ Ye
 ‘ seek a proof of Christ (a *mere man*!) speaking
 ‘ in me.—5. Examine yourselves whether ye be
 ‘ in the faith;—Know ye not, that Christ (a
 ‘ *mere man*!) is in you, except ye be repro-
 ‘ bates!—Verse 13, The grace of our Lord Jesus
 ‘ Christ, (that is, the grace of a *mere man*!) and
 ‘ the love of God, (the *supreme Being*!) and
 ‘ the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, (that is the
 ‘ fellowship of a *power or property* of God!) be
 ‘ with you all! Amen!’

Leaving you to wonder, Rev. Sir, how any
 man of sense can patronize and attempt to re-
 concile

concile with the Scriptures, a doctrine, which when brought to that touchstone, appears to be so absurd and ridiculous,

I subscribe

myself,

Yours, &c.

LETTER

LETTER III.

REV. SIR,

IN the two former Letters we reviewed a variety of passages occurring in the Epistle to the *Romans*, and the two Epistles to the *Corinthians*, which, on the supposition that the Author of those Epistles held the doctrine of Christ's mere humanity, manifestly appear to have been written without regard to common sense. I proceed now to lay before you a few texts, of a familiar nature, from the lesser Epistles of the same Apostle. And several, not a little remarkable in this view, occur in the very beginning of the first of these Epistles. According to Dr. *Priestley's* hypothesis, they must be read as follows, Gal. i. 1, 'Paul, an Apostle, not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, (a mere man!) and God the Father, who raised him from the dead.—Grace to you, and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ; (that is, from the Eternal God and a mere man!) who (though no more than a man,) gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us, (many myriads as we are!) from this present evil world. I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ, (the grace of a mere man!) unto another Gospel, which is not another, but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the Gospel of Christ, (which you know is the Gospel of a mere man!)—Do I now persuade (or solicit the favour of) man? or do I seek to please men? For if I yet pleased men, I should not (please or) be the Servant of Christ (a mere man!)—But I certify you, brethren, that the Gospel

‘ Gospel which was preached of me, is not after
 ‘ man. For I neither received it of *man*, neither
 ‘ was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus
 ‘ Christ (*a mere man!*)’

Now, Sir, is not all this very extraordinary?
 ‘ An Apostle not of *men*, neither by *man*, but by
 ‘ a *mere man!*—If I pleased, or were the servant
 ‘ of *men*, I should not be the servant of a
 ‘ *mere man!* The Gospel which I preached is
 ‘ not after *man*, but after a *mere man!*’ Is it not
 excellent sense, this? worthy of the *learning* of
 the disciple of *Gamaliel*, and of the inspiration
 of the Apostle of God? The Apostle proceeds,
 verse 15, ‘ When it pleased God, who separated
 ‘ me from my mother’s womb, and called me by
 ‘ his grace,—to reveal his Son, (that is to reveal
 ‘ a *mere man!*) in me, that I might preach him,
 ‘ (the same *mere man!*) among the heathen,’ as
 the grand foundation of their confidence, and
 hope, 1 Cor. iii. 11, Eph. i. 12, 13, the object
 of their love, 1 Cor. xvi. and spring of their
 obedience, 2 Cor. v. 14, immediately I conferred,
 not with flesh and blood!

I shall take no notice of what the Apostle has
 delivered with great clearness in the next Chap.
 respecting justification by faith in this *mere*
man, as the *Socinians* think him, though absolutely
 irreconcilable with their doctrine; but what he
 has occasionally remarked, respecting the union
 which he had with Christ, and which indeed all
 that are justified have with him, must not be
 passed over, as being perfectly unintelligible on
 their hypothesis. Verse 20, We read, ‘ I am
 ‘ crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet
 ‘ not I, but Christ,’ (a *mere man*, says Dr. Priest-
 ley,) ‘ liveth in me, and the life I live in the
 ‘ flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God,’ that
 is, by faith in a *mere man*, ‘ who hath loved me
 ‘ and given himself for me.’ Will Dr. Priestley,
 inform

‘inform us how Christ, if a mere man could
 ‘live in the Apostle? And will he tell us how
 ‘he could redeem us all, (that believe in him,
 ‘whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*,) from the curse of
 ‘the Law,—(see Chap. iii. and 13,) that the
 ‘blessing of *Abraham* might come on the *Gentiles*
 ‘through *Jesus Christ* (this mere man!) that we
 ‘might receive the promise of the Spirit through
 ‘faith,’ viz. faith in the same *mere man*! John
 ‘vii. 37, 38.

Proceed we to the next Chapter, in the beginning
 of which we meet with another remarkable passage
 to the same purpose. According to the *Socinian*
 hypothesis, it must be understood thus. ‘When
 ‘the fulness of time was come, God sent forth
 ‘his Son,’ that is, caused a mere man to be born,
 —‘to redeem them that were under the Law,
 ‘that we might receive the adoption of sons, and
 ‘because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the
 ‘Spirit of his Son,’ (viz. the Spirit of a mere
 man!) ‘into your hearts, crying, *Abba Father*.’
 I would enquire here, if Christ be a *mere man*,
 who had no prior existence, and was not even
 conceived in any extraordinary way, 1st. Why
 is he *emphatically*, and by way of *eminence*, termed
 God’s Son? 2d. Why is he said to be *sent forth*?
 And 3d. Why does the Apostle speak of his
Spirit being sent into the hearts of the faithful?
 How can the Spirit of one *mere man*, be sent
 into another man’s heart?—The Apostle goes on
 ‘Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye
 ‘did service unto them, who by nature are *no*
 ‘*Gods*, but now, after that ye have known God,
 ‘or rather are known of him,’ both ye and we
 (he might have added) do service to one who is
 a *mere man*! For none of us liveth to himself, and
 no man dieth to himself, but we live and die to him

that died for us and rose again! Rom. xiv. 7. and 2 Cor. v. 14.

There are many other passages in this Epistle equally absurd on the Socinian principles. As verse 14, 'Ye received me as an Angel of God, even as (a mere man!) Jesus Christ.'—Verse 19, 'My little children of whom I travail in birth again until Christ, (a mere man!) be formed in you! —Chap. v. 1, Stand fast in the liberty where with (a mere man) Christ hath made us free! Chap. vi. 2, Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the Law of Christ, (that is, the Law of a mere man!)—Verse 14, God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, (the cross of the same mere man!) by whom, (a mere man, though he be) the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world! For in the (same mere man) Christ Jesus, neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.—From henceforth let no man trouble me, for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus, (viz. the marks of the sufferings I have endured for the sake of a mere man!) Brethren, the grace of (this mere man) the Lord Jesus Christ, be with your Spirit.'

You see, Rev. Sir, that this Epistle to the *Galatians*, beside the many passages which are similar to those found in the preceding Epistles, has several of a peculiar nature, in which the Lord Jesus is set in opposition to men, and to be made an Apostle by him, to receive the Gospel from him, and seeking to please him, are opposed to the being made an Apostle by *man*, receiving the Gospel from man, and seeking to please man. Now, in these instances, Dr. *Priestley* will find it hard work indeed, to vindicate the common sense of the Apostle, and yet prove that he held the doctrine of Christ's mere humanity.—Examine
we

we now the Epistle to the *Ephesians*. This, also, furnishes us with many instances of the Apostle's writing without common sense, on the supposition of his being an Unitarian. Passing over the *Inscription* and *Benediction*, in which, as in his other Epistles, he styles himself an Apostle of this *mere man*, (as Dr. *Priestley* thinks him) inscribes his Epistle to the faithful in him, and wishes them *grace* and *peace* from him, as well as from the Eternal God: Verse the 3d. &c. He speaks of the Father as blessing us, (viz. all the faithful) with all spiritual blessings *in him*, choosing us *in him* to be holy,—predestinating us to the Adoption of children, making us accepted and giving us redemption *through his blood*, the forgiveness of sins:—And then verse 10, he proceeds as follows,—‘ That in the dispensation of the fulness of time he might gather together in one, all things in Christ (that is, in a *mere man*!) both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him, (*mere man* though he be!) in whom also we have obtained an inheritance,—according to the counsel of his own will, that we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ (that is, who trusted in a *mere man*!) in whom ye also trusted (and were so far from being condemned or blamed by God for so doing, that) ‘ after ye believed in him, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance’.—This *mere man* (verse 20,) ‘ the Father hath set at his own right hand, in heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come, and hath put all things under his feet, and given him to be the head over all things to the Church, which is his body,

‘body, the fulness of him (viz. of the *mere man*!)’
 ‘that FILLETH ALL IN ALL!’ Is there any reason or sense in any part of this, especially in the last clause? How can a *mere man* be the head of the church universal, not only *guiding* and *governing*, but *vitally influencing* all true believers, in all nations and ages?—And how could a *mere man* bring *Jews* and *Gentiles* nigh to each other by his blood, as the Apostle observes in the next Chapter, or be their *peace*, *making in himself one new man*? And having formed them into one body, how could he reconcile both unto God, by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby? or come from heaven, even while he remained there, and preach peace to the *Gentiles*, who were afar off, and to the *Jews* that were nigh, granting unto both access through himself (a *mere man*;) by one Spirit unto the Father?

Another remarkable passage we meet with,—Chap. iii. 8, ‘Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints is this grace given that I should preach among the *Gentiles*, the unsearchable riches of Christ (that is, the unsearchable riches of a *mere man*!) and to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ,’ viz. by a *mere man*, who had no existence, till all things had been created at least 4000 years!—Such are the absurdities which the *Socinian* doctrine fathers upon the disciple of *Gamaliel*, and of the Lord Jesus! Nay, and what is worse, makes him utter these absurdities to God upon his knees, in the most solemn acts of devotion. For instance, verse 14, ‘I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom, (though a *mere man*!) the whole family of heaven and earth is named,—that Christ (*mere man* as he is!) may dwell

‘*dwell in your hearts* by faith!—that being rooted
‘and grounded in love, ye may be able to com-
‘prehend, with all saints, what is the breadth
‘and length, and depth and height, and to
‘know the love of Christ, (that is, the love of
‘a mere man!) which (though it be but the love of
‘a mere man,) *passeth knowledge!*—that ye might
‘be filled with all the fulness of God.’ How a
mere man should *dwell in our hearts*, how his love
should *pass knowledge*, and how the knowledge
of it, in that degree which is attainable, should
be a mean of *filling us with all the fulness of God*,
is surely, to say the least, not to be conceived.

Another remarkable instance of the absurdity of supposing the Apostle to have held the doctrine of Christ's mere humanity occurs in the next Chapter, verse 7,—17, 'Unto every one of us is grace given, according to the measure of the gift of Christ (that is, the gift of a mere man!)—Wherefore he saith when he (this mere man,) ascended up on high; he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. Now that he ascended, what is it? (what does it imply?) but that he descended first into the lower parts of the earth.' Will the Socinians inform us, how a mere man, who had no existence till born in *Bethlehem*, and who of consequence had never been in heaven could descend from thence? 'he that descended (I say) is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he (a mere man!) might FILL ALL THINGS! And he (a mere man as he is!) gave Apostles and Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the edifying the body of Christ, (that is, the body of a mere man!) till we all come in the unity of the faith, and knowledge of the Son of God, (the faith and knowledge of a mere man!) unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the ful-

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ness

ness of Christ. That we may grow up into him in all things, who (though a *mere man*!) is the head, from whom the whole body, fitly joined together and compacted, by that which every joint supplieth, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love!

Pass we on to the 5th Chapter. There we meet with more instances, and equally striking. Walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and (though a *mere man*!) hath given himself for us, (one *mere man* to ransom millions!) an offering, and a sacrifice to God of a sweet-smelling savour.—Wherefore he saith (verse 14.) Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ (a *mere man*!) shall give thee light! for though a mere man, he can hear and answer prayer, and give the light of life to as many as apply to him!—Verse 22 Wives submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord, (a *mere man*,) for the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the Church, and he (a *mere man*!) is the Saviour of the body! Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and (though a *mere man*,) gave himself for it, that he (*mere man* as he is,) might sanctify and cleanse it, and present it to HIMSELF a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that it should be holy and without blemish!—So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies; for no man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord (viz. a *mere man*!) the church; for we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bone.—

The next Chapter is exactly in the same strain: It abounds with instances of a similar kind, 'Ser-
vants

'vants be obedient to them that are your masters,
 'according to the flesh,—in singleness of heart, as
 'unto Christ, (*a mere man !*) not with eye service
 'as *men-pleasers*, but as the servants of Christ, (*a*
 'mere man !) doing the will of God from the
 'heart, with good will, doing service as to the
 'Lord, (*a mere man*) and not to men ! Knowing,
 'that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the
 'same shall he receive of the Lord, (*this same*
 '*mere man*) whether he be bond or free. And ye
 'masters do the same things unto them, forbear-
 'ing threatening, knowing that your master also
 '(*a mere man !*) is in heaven, neither is there re-
 'spect of persons with him. Finally, my bre-
 'thren, be strong in the Lord, (that is, in a *mere*
 '*man !*) and in the power of his might !—Peace
 'be to the brethren, and love, with faith, from
 'God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ,
 '(that is, from the *supreme God* and a *mere man !*)
 'Grace be with all them that love our Lord
 'Jesus Christ (*the mere man* I so often name) in
 'sincerity !' Wishing, Rev. Sir, that, should
 Dr. Priestley think it worth his while to shew us
 how the sundry passages quod in this Letter
 from the Epistles to the *Galatians* and *Ephesians*
 might, consistently with common sense, be writ-
 ten by one who held the doctrine of Christ's *mere*
humanity, he may not forget to tell us how his
 unwearied endeavours to degrade the Lord Jesus
 are consistent with *loving* him in *sincerity*,

I subscribe myself, &c.

LETTER

LETTER IV.

REV. SIR,

THOUGH I made no particular remark upon it, yet I hope, in looking over the last Letter, it would not escape your notice, that in the Epistle to the *Ephesians* also as well as in that to the *Galatians*, the Apostle repeatedly opposes the Lord Jesus Christ to men.—‘Not with eye-service ‘as *men-pleasers*, but as the servants of *Christ*;’—‘With good-will doing service as to the Lord ‘(viz. Christ) and not to men.’ Now on the *Socinian* principles, this is saying, not as *men pleasers*, but as *man-pleasers*,—doing service as to a *man* and not to *men*!

The Epistle to the *Philippians* comes next in course, and contains a similar doctrine, as to the point in question, with the Epistles already considered. Indeed, the Apostle is consistent with himself in all his Epistles and according to the Doctor’s hypothesis consistent in *inconsistency*. Here, as before, he styles himself (not indeed an *Apostle* but) a *servant of Jesus Christ*, and represents *Timothy* as being joined with himself in this state of servitude to a *mere man*, and from this *mere man*, as well as from the Almighty God, he begs grace and peace for the saints at *Philippi*, as he had done for the Churches to whom the preceding Epistles are addressed.—And then, verse 12, he writes, ‘I would that you should observe, ‘brethren,—that my bonds in Christ, (my bonds ‘endured for a *mere man*!) are manifest in all the ‘palace;—and some preach Christ, (that is, preach ‘a *mere man*!) even of envy and strife, and some ‘also of good-will. The one preach Christ, (the ‘*same mere man*) of contention;—but the other ‘of love. What then? Notwithstanding, every way,

way, whether in pretence or in truth, Christ, (the
 mere man!) is preached, and I therein do rejoice,
 yea and I will rejoice: For I know that this shall
 turn to my salvation through your prayer and the
 supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, (that is, the
 supply of the Spirit of a *mere man*!) according to
 my earnest expectation, and my hope, that in
 nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all
 boldness, as always, so now also, Christ (a mere
 man!) shall be magnified in my body, whether
 it be by life or death.' For to me to live is
 Christ: (that is, a *mere man*, "is the supreme end
 of my life, and I value my life only as it is
 capable of being referred to the purposes of his
 honour,") 'and to die is gain, and what I shall
 chuse, I wot not, for I am in a strait betwixt
 two, having a desire to depart and be with
 Christ, (the mere man, I speak of) which is far
 better, nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more
 needful for you:—that your rejoicing may be
 more abundant in Jesus Christ (the same *mere man*)
 by my coming to you again. Only let your con-
 versation be as it becometh the Gospel of Christ,
 (viz. the Gospel of a *mere man*;)—in nothing
 terrified by your adversaries—for to you it is
 given in behalf of Christ (in behalf of a mere
 man!) not only to believe in him, but also to
 suffer for his sake,' (for the sake of the same *mere*
man!) A strange doctrine, this indeed!

But to proceed Chap. ii. 1, we read, 'If there
 be any consolation in Christ, (that is, on the
 principles I oppose, in a *mere man*!) if any
 comfort of love, if any fellowship of the spirit,
 —fulfil ye my joy:—and let this mind be
 in you, which was also in Christ Jesus,
 who (though but a *mere man*, that had no ex-
 istence till born in *Bethlehem*, in the days of
Augustus Cæsar, yet) being, *υπαρχων*, *subsisting in*
 the

' *form of God* (that is, say the Socinians, being en-
 ' dowed, like *Moses* and others, with the power
 ' of working miracles!) thought it not robbery
 ' to be equal with God,' a mere man, thought it
 not robbery to be equal with God! or as the
 the Doctor's party, contrary to the *natural* and
proper import of the words, wish to translate it,
 did not assume an *equality with God*,—that is, a
mere man, manifested great humility in not as-
 suming an *equality with God*! The Apostle goes
 on, ' but emptied himself, taking the form of a
 ' servant, made in the likeness of men (that is, a
 ' *mere man* was made in the likeness of men! and
 ' *emptied himself* that he might be made in that
 ' likeness!) And being found in fashion as a
 ' man, (for in what other fashion was it reason-
 ' able to suppose a *mere man* could be found?) he
 ' humbled himself (still more) and became obedi-
 ' ent unto death.—Wherefore God also hath
 ' highly exalted him, and given him a name a-
 ' bove every name, that at the name of Jesus,
 ' (viz. the name of a *mere man*!) every knee
 ' should bow of those in heaven, and those in
 ' earth, and those under the earth; and that every
 ' tongue should confess that Jesus Christ (a *mere*
 ' *man*!) is Lord, to the glory of God the Father!'

I appeal here to any reasonable man, whether
 it were possible for any one possessed of common
 sense, to believe Jesus Christ to be a *mere man*,
 and yet to write in this manner: and I appeal to
 any person possessed of a grain of piety, a single
 spark of the fear of God, whether he could con-
 sider the Son of God as a mere man, and yet
 speak as follows: ' I trust in the Lord Jesus,
 ' (verse 19, that is, on the Socinian hypothesis, I
 ' trust in a *mere man*,) to send *Timotheus* shortly
 ' unto you, for I have no man like minded,—for
 ' all seek their own, not the things which are
 ' Jesus Christ's (that is, which are a *mere man's*!)

' How

‘—Him I hope to send, and I trust in the Lord,
 ‘(the same mere man,) that I also myself shall
 ‘come shortly.’ Surely the putting our trust in
 a mere man for things which are wholly in God’s
 power and absolutely at his disposal, is flagrant
 idolatry, and the open declaration of that trust
 is a public avowal of that idolatry.

Indeed if Christ be a mere man, St. Paul idolized him almost as often as he mentioned him. Many instances occur in the next chapter, ‘Finally my brethren (says he, verse 1,) rejoice in the Lord,’ (viz. in a mere man,) for, verse 3, ‘we are the circumcision who worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus.—Verse 6, 7, What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ, (that is, for a mere man!) Yea doubtless and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of (this same mere man) Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom, (though but a man,) I have suffered the loss of all things, and I do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,—that is, that I may win a mere man, ‘and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, (that is, faith in a mere man!) the righteousness which is of God by faith: that I may know him, (may know a mere man!) and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable to his death:—that I may apprehend that for which, also, I am apprehended of Christ Jesus,’ that is, of a mere man! As this is certainly magnifying a mere man, too much; so in the passage following (verse 20,) the Apostle speaks of expecting from him what no mere man can possibly perform. ‘We look, says he, for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body,
 ‘according

‘according to the working, whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself.’ The Apostle however, was not only persuaded of Christ’s ability to do all this, but believed that he could even impart strength to others, assuring us, in the 13th verse of the next Chapter, that he himself could *do all things*, (viz. all things which it was his duty to do) *through Christ strengthening him*, whose grace therefore, before he puts a period to his Epistle, he desires for the *Philippians*, as in his other Epistles he does for the other churches, saying, *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ*, (that is, as Dr. Priestley will have it, the grace of a mere man!) be with you all! Amen!

Such, Rev. Sir, according to Dr. Priestley’s hypothesis, is the doctrine of St. Paul, concerning Christ in this Epistle to the *Philippians*, a doctrine which I think every intelligent reader must pronounce most absurd and ridiculous — To rejoice so excessively that a *mere man* was preached, though at the expence of many and extreme sufferings endured by those who preached him; to represent serving and glorifying him as the one great end of living, and to intimate that life itself was only desirable so far as it answered that end; to censure those who sought their *own things*, and not the things of this mere man: — to speak of *trusting in him*, expecting the *supply of his Spirit*, and being able to do *all things* through his help; to lay it down as a principal branch of the character of a Christian to *rejoice in him*, and repeatedly to exhort all Christians to do this: — to mention it as a great favour to be permitted to *suffer for him*, and to represent *all things* as *vile and worthless*, when compared to the *excellency of his knowledge*; to speak with satisfaction of having won him, though with the loss of every thing beside, even liberty and life, just
about

about to sacrificed for his sake; and that he was magnified whatever his servant might endure: to proclaim him as able to change even our vile bodies, and make them conformable to his own glorious body, nay, and to subdue all things to himself: and to begin and end his Epistle with solemn prayer, addressed to him for grace to be conferred upon the people to whom he wrote;—surely these things, (to say nothing of the celebrated passage in which this mere man, as the Doctor thinks him, shines forth in the form of God, and is declared to be equal with God,) are very extraordinary, and not to be reconciled with sound reason, or common sense, any more than with inspiration, or piety.

I proceed now to the Epistle to the Collossians, which will also furnish us with a variety of examples of a similar kind. Having stiled himself, Chap. i. 1, An Apostle of Jesus Christ, and inscribed his Epistle to the saints and faithful brethren in him, he begs as usual for grace and peace from him, as well as from God our Father; and (verse 14) informs us that we have redemption through his blood, (that is, if we may believe Dr. Priestley, through the blood of a mere man!) even the forgiveness of sins: ‘who (adds he) is the IMAGE of the invisible God, the first born of every creature, for BY HIM (though a mere man, born in the days of Augustus Cæsar) WERE ALL THINGS CREATED, that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be Thrones, or Dominions, Principalities or Powers: ALL THINGS were created by HIM (this mere man) AND FOR HIM, (the same mere man!) and he (though he had no existence till about 60 years ago*) is BEFORE ALL THINGS, and BY HIM

* St. Paul is supposed to have wrote this Epistle, as also that to the Ephesians, about the year of our Lord 63.

' HIM (a mere man) ALL THINGS CONSIST: And
 ' he is the head of his body the Church: the begin-
 ' ning, the first born from the dead: that in all
 ' things, he (a mere man!) might have the pre-emi-
 ' nence. For it pleased the Father that in him (a
 ' mere man!) should all fulness dwell, and ha-
 ' ving made peace through the blood of his cross,
 ' by him (the same mere man) TO RECONCILE
 ' ALL THINGS to himself, by him, (a mere man!) I
 ' say, whether they be things on earth, or in heaven:
 ' Surely this is unparalleled. No nonsense that ever
 ' was uttered, can equal it! The Apostle proceeds,
 ' And you who were sometime alienated and
 ' enemies in your minds by wicked works, yet
 ' now hath he (a mere man!) reconciled in the
 ' body of his flesh, through death to present you
 ' holy and unblamable, and unreprouable in his
 ' sight,' (the sight of the same mere man!) ' The
 ' mystery (verse 26,) hid from ages, and from ge-
 ' nerations, is now made manifest to his saints, to
 ' whom God would make known what is the
 ' riches of the glory of this mystery, among the
 ' Gentiles which is, Christ, (a mere man!) in you
 ' the hope of glory: whom (a mere man though he
 ' be!) we preach, warning every man, and teach-
 ' ing every man, in all wisdom, that we may pre-
 ' sent every man perfect in Christ Jesus, (the same
 ' mere man.) Whereunto I also labour according
 ' to his working, (that is, the working of a mere
 ' man!) which worketh in me mightily.'

Now is not this strange doctrine? A mere man
 hath reconciled to God, those that were alienated
 and enemies in their minds by wicked works! A
 mere man is in them, many thousands and myriads
 as they are, the hope of glory, that is, the founda-
 tion and source of their hope! A mere man works
 mightily in and by his Apostle! The Gospel
 (Chap. ii, 2,) is the mystery of the Eternal God
 and

and of a mere man! And in a mere man (verse 3,) are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge! He goes on, 'And this I say, lest any man should beguile you with enticing words.—As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord (the *mere man* I speak of) so walk ye in him, rooted and built up in him, (the same *mere man*!) and established in the faith.—Beware (then) lest any man spoil you through Philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ' (a *mere man*!) 'For in HIM (*mere man* as he is!) dwelleth ALL THE FULNESS OF THE GODHEAD BODILY; and ye are complete in HIM, who (though but a man) is the HEAD OF ALL PRINCIPALITY AND POWER:' Observe, Sir, *All the fulness of the Godhead bodily* (or substantially) dwells in a mere man! and a mere man is the head of *all Principality and Power*!

The Apostle mentions afterwards the *worshipping of Angels*, and opposes it to *holding the head*, from which (adds he) all the body, (the church universal, with every member thereof,) with joints and bands, having nourishment ministered and knit together, increaseth with all the increase of God.' So that, it seems, this mere man ministers spiritual nourishment to every true member of his mystical body, that is, to every true believer in every part of the world, and causeth them all to increase, with all the increase of God! I hope, if Dr. Priestley cannot shew *how* this is done, he can at least prove that it is *possible*; and that this same mere man is capable also of being OUR LIFE, as the Apostle observes in the next Chapter, verse 4, and *our ALL*, verse 11, and even IN ALL that believe!

Sundry are the passages in the remaining part of this Epistle, in which the Apostle affirms of Christ, or ascribes to him what common sense will pronounce, cannot belong to a mere man. For example ' Forgiving one another if any man ' have a complaint against any; even as Christ ' (a mere man) forgave you, so also do ye.—and ' whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in ' the name of the Lord Jesus, (that is, in the ' name of a mere man) giving thanks to God, ' even the Father, by him—Wives submit yourselves to your own husbands, as it is fit in the ' Lord, (a mere man!)—Servants obey in all things, ' your Masters according to the flesh, and whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, (a ' mere man!) and not unto men! knowing that ' of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the ' inheritance, for ye serve (a mere man!) the Lord ' Christ!—Ch. iv. iv. Masters give unto your servants that which is just and equal, knowing ' that ye also have a Master, (viz. a mere man!) in ' heaven.—12, *Epaphras*, who is one of you, a ' servant of Christ, (that is, of a mere man!) saluteth you,—17, say to *Archippas*, take heed to the ' ministry which thou hast received of the Lord ' (a mere man!) to fulfil it.—Grace be with you ! ' Amen !'

Methinks, Rev. Sir, it must be impossible for any one to pay the slightest attention to the above texts, quoted from the Epistle to *Colossians*, and here interpreted according to Dr. *Priestley's* hypothesis, without being convinced that his doctrine, and that of St. *Paul*, concerning the person and offices of Christ are absolutely irreconcilable on the principles of common sense. Would any man, who was not absolutely an idiot or lunatic, if he believed Jesus Christ to be no more than a man, have held him up to view as the

the person, BY WHOM ALL THINGS WERE CREATED, *that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities, or powers, nay, as the person FOR WHOM as well as BY WHOM, they were created, and who of consequence existed BEFORE ALL THINGS, AND BY WHOM ALL THINGS CONSIST and are upheld?* Would he have represented him as a person in whom *all fulness dwells, yea, all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and as the head of his body the church, and not an head of guidance or government only, but of vital influence also?* Would he have spoken of this mere man, as *making peace by the blood of his cross, and reconciling all things to God, whether things on earth, or things in heaven?* Would he have taught it as a great and important mystery, hid from ages and generations of old, but now made manifest to the saints, that this mere man was in real Christians *their hope of glory, working mightily in and by his Apostles and Servants?*

Further would he, in speaking of the mystery of the Gospel (which by the by, on the Doctor's principles can hardly be termed a mystery at all;) have denominated it the *mystery of God the Father and of Christ, this mere man, thus joining him with the eternal God, and making him, together with the self-existent Jehovah, the author of the Gospel?* Would he have represented him as a person in whom *are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, and the head of all principality and power?* Would he have spoken of *receiving him, walking in him, and being rooted and built up, and complete in him, or as εν αυτω πεπληρωμενοι* rather signifies, *filled with or by him?* Would he, in guarding them against the vain deceits of Philosophy, (those deceits which are *after the rudiments of the world, and the tradition of men, and not after Christ,*) have cautioned them against the

worship of Angels and opposed it to *holding the head*, Christ, an expression which in this connexion manifestly implies the *worshipping him*, which we have had already sufficient, and shall have yet much more abundant proof, that the Apostles and first Christians did? Would he have termed this mere man, as the Doctor thinks him, the *life* of true believers, and their *all in all*, exhorting them to *forgive one another, as he had forgiven them*?—Would he have opposed him to men, and urged servants, whatsoever they did, to do it heartily as to him (*a mere man!*) and not to men, *knowing that of him, they should receive the reward of the inheritance, for that they served the Lord Christ*? These enquiries, Rev. Sir, are of deep importance and such as on the Socinian principles, I am well convinced Dr. Priestley will never be able to answer to the satisfaction of those who pay any deference to the authority of St. Paul.

I am,

Rev. Sir,

Yours, &c.

LETTER

L E T T E R V.

REV. SIR,

DR. PRIESTLEY, would fain persuade us that St. Paul's idea of the Person of Christ, was the same with that which he entertains. But, were there no other, there is at least one *insurmountable* objection to this, and that is the different conduct of the Apostle, from that of the Doctor, with regard to *divine worship*. The Doctor confines this entirely to the *Father*. He never, in any instance, addresses it to the *Son*. He judges it would be idolatry so to do. But we have already seen in many undeniable instances, that St. Paul worshipped Jesus Christ. To say nothing of the many other passages which have occurred in the Epistles already reviewed, the *Benedictions* wherewith he has begun and ended these Epistles are incontrovertible proofs of it. For in these he asks *grace*, or *grace and peace*, of *Jesus Christ*, as well as of the *supreme and eternal Father*. We have already met with so many instances of this kind, that I am ashamed to trouble you with any more. I shall therefore pass over those occurring in the two next Epistles, (viz. the Epistles to the *Thessalonians*,) and I shall also omit mentioning divers texts in those Epistles concerning Christ, which if understood as spoken of a *mere man*, appear equally absurd with those quoted in the four preceding Letters.

But *two passages* I must refer to, as affording a plain and evident demonstration, that the Apostle viewed the Lord Jesus Christ in a different light from that in which Dr. Priestley beholds him. The one passage is in the 1st. Epistle, Chap. iii. 11, and according to the Doctor's hypothesis,

pothesis, must be interpreted as follows—"Now God himself, even our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ (a *mere man*!) direct our way unto you. And the Lord (the same *mere man*!) make you to encrease in love one towards another, and towards all men,—to the end he may establish your hearts unblamable in holiness, before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.' A manifest and undeniable instance this, of a *formal and solemn prayer*, addressed to the Lord Jesus, that is, as Dr. Priestley will have it, to a *mere man*! and by one who, he says, believed him to be a *mere man*! Surely it behoves him to consider how, on his principles, he can acquit the Apostle of the gross crime of idolatry!—The other passage (2 Epist. Chap. ii. 16,) must, on the same hypothesis, be understood in the same manner. 'NOW OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST HIMSELF (a *mere man*!) and God even our Father, who hath loved us, and given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and establish you in every good word and work.' Here again we have a plain instance of the Apostle's praying to Christ, and that at the very time and in the very manner in which he prays to the Father.

The Doctor may, pass these things over slightly. But you will agree with me, Dear Sir, that reason will require him either to allow that the Apostle held a different sentiment concerning the Lord Jesus, from that which he entertains, or to give us proof that he can imitate the Apostle, and worship Christ as he did. While then, he informs his people, in the language of St. Paul in these Epistles, that Jesus Christ, *delivers them from the wrath to come* (1 Epist. Chap. i. 10.) and that they *obtain Salvation thro' him*,
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(Chap. v. 9.) That he is *that Lord* (2 Epist. Chap. i. 7,) *that shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel and the trump of God; who shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty Angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, the person from whose presence and from the glory of whose power such shall be punished with everlasting destruction, when he (a mere man) shall come to be glorified in his Saints, and admired in all them that believe:—and while he prays to the Father for his flock that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in them, according to the grace of our God and Jesus our Lord: let him approach also the Lord Jesus Christ in prayer after the example of St. Paul.* Though this might a little astonish some of his hearers, as being a procedure that they had not been accustomed to, yet it would have more weight than any thing he has yet said or done to convince the public, that he does not differ so widely from *St. Paul* as the generality of mankind in this kingdom suppose him to do. But if he cannot conscientiously do this, as believing it would be gross Idolatry to worship a mere man in this manner, or speak of him in this exalted strain, then let him acknowledge that *St. Paul* and he differ widely in their views of the Lord Jesus.

Merhinks, Rev. Sir, on the *Socinian* principles, the remarkable passage contained in the 2d. Chapter of the latter Epistle to this people, which has generally been applied by Protestants to the *Pope of Rome*, might with much greater propriety be applied to Jesus Christ. He, you know, has been worshipped *as God* for 1700 years at least, by the generality of Christians, and he, as *God*, hath sat and still sits in the Temple or Church of God,

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shewing himself that he is God; proclaiming himself the ROOT as well as offspring of David, the ALPHA and OMEGA, the FIRST and the LAST, and declaring that all men ought to honour him, the Son, even as they honour the Father, and that he that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father. Now if he be no such Being, but only a mere man, and therefore no proper object of divine worship, it seems it would be no difficult matter, for so great a master of the art of reasoning as Dr. Priestley, to prove that he is the great *Impostor* and *Usurper*, primarily meant by St. Paul in this passage, the grand idol (as indeed he must think him) of professing Christians: an *Impostor* and *Usurper*, by so much greater than the Pope, or any other that hath arisen in the Church of God, claiming divine honours, and exercising dominion over men's consciences; by how much he hath been obeyed more *unreservedly* and *implicitly*, and hath been worshipped more *devoutly* and *universally* than they.

You know, Sir, it is generally supposed that all the most remarkable Apostacies from *faith* in and *piety* towards God, have been distinctly foretold in the holy Scriptures; now, if Jesus Christ be a mere man, the worship of him so generally practised, all over Christendom, for so long a run of ages, must be the greatest corruption of true religion, and the most remarkable defection from the service of the one living and true God that ever took place in the visible Church. And it would be strange indeed, and what many would consider as an insuperable objection to the Doctor's whole scheme, if this greatest of all Apostacies should nowhere be foretold in the oracles of God, when Apostacies far less criminal and general, are constantly found to have been

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predicated there.—But if it must be supposed to be prophesied of somewhere, it may be worth the Doctor's while to consider, whether this passage is not as likely to foretel it as any other.

It describes a great and general falling away from the worship and service of the true God, a grand and universally spreading idolatry, supported by miracles real or pretended. This, according to his hypothesis must be very applicable to that Apostacy, from the worship of *one God only*, which the Doctor and his friends deplore, which they are using all possible means to remedy, and which he somewhere calls the *idolizing of Jesus Christ*. And however it might shock the prejudices of some half-thinking zealots to find, that, according to this interpretation, epithets are given to Jesus Christ, such as they have not been accustomed to hear him characterized by, and such as their false delicacy may deem *blasphemous*; yet this can no way stagger the Doctor. For how can he think any appellation too severe which is given to one, who, though a *mere man*, weak, fallible and peccable like others, for so many centuries has been worshipped as God, and has been the grand idol of so great a part of the known world, and has so manifestly, by word and deed countenanced and encouraged, nay, and commanded that idolatry.

Now, Sir, when the Doctor has once proved this point, he will have done his business effectually indeed. He will have brought Jesus Christ as low as he could wish him. He then, instead of being the LORD OF GLORY, and SON OF GOD, is discovered to be the *Man of sin, and Son of—* But I must check myself: The whole truth must not be spoken at once, because you know Sir, people cannot bear it. And at present there is amongst us an almost universally prevailing prejudice

judice that Jesus Christ, so far from being the person described by St. Paul, in this passage, *whose coming is after the working of Satan ; with all power and signs, and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish*, is in reality that Lord who *shall consume that wicked one, with the spirit of his mouth, and destroy him with brightness of his coming*. If this prejudice should have any foundation, I fear Dr. Priestley will be found to have entertained and taught a great error, and may be in danger of meeting with a severe rebuke, if nothing worse, in that day from him he has thus degraded.

Praying that we, Rev. Sir, and all professing Christians, may be so endowed with that Spirit of truth, whose office it is to take of the things of Jesus, and shew them unto us, that we may both form proper conceptions of his wonderful person, and pay him the honour due unto his name, I break off here, and subscribe myself,

Your obedient servant,

in him, even in Christ Jesus, &c.

LETTER

LETTER VI.

REV. SIR,

TIMOTHY, Titus and Philemon, you know, were particular and intimate friends of St. Paul. In the Epistles inscribed to them therefore, at least we may expect to find his sentiments concerning Jesus Christ, the grand subject of all his Letters, naked and without disguise. Let us then narrowly examine these Epistles, and see whether they comport with Dr. Priestley's doctrine. In order hereto let us adopt the method pursued above, and see whether those passages, which speak of Christ, appear to contain good sense and sound divinity, when understood according to the Doctor's hypothesis. — Chap. i. 1. 'Paul an Apostle of Jesus Christ, by the commandment of God our Saviour, (the infinite, eternal and supreme Jehovah) and the Lord Jesus Christ, (a mere man, weak, fallible and paccable, who, mere man though he be, is nevertheless) our hope; unto Timothy, my own son in the faith, grace, mercy and peace (from both these persons) from God our Father (the supreme Being) and Jesus Christ our Lord (a mere man!)

Verse 12, 'I thank (this mere man!) Jesus Christ our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry, who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor and injurious. But I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. And the grace of (this mere man!) our Lord, was exceeding abundant, with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus, (the same mere man.) This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation that Jesus Christ a mere man, who was not till he

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‘ was born in *Bethlehem* !) came into the world to
 ‘ save sinners, of whom I am chief. Howbeit, for
 ‘ this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first
 ‘ (this same *mere man* !) Jesus Christ might shew
 ‘ forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them
 ‘ who should hereafter believe on him (that is,
 ‘ believe on a *mere man* !) to everlasting life,’ (for
 everlasting life is obtained by believing on him,
 though a *mere man* !)

What a multitude of proofs, *undeniable* proofs, have we in these few verses, either that St. Paul was devoid of common sense, or that he viewed Jesus Christ in a very different light from that in which Dr. *Priestley* considers him. To term the Lord Jesus *our hope*, and represent himself as made an Apostle by his commandment, as well as by the commandment of God the *Father* ; to look up to him as well as to the Father for *grace, mercy and peace*, to be conferred upon *Timothy* ; to *thank* him for putting him into the ministry, and enabling him to be faithful : to speak of him as exercising towards him *all long-suffering*, and conferring upon him *exceeding abundant grace* ; to glory in it as a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation that he came into the world (an expression which plainly implies his having existed before he so came) to save sinners ; and to represent everlasting life as being obtained by believing in him :—surely *any*, and much more *all* of these particulars *demonstrate*, that if St. Paul possessed, I will not say the *inspiration* of an *Apostle*, but the *reason of a man*, he must have considered Jesus Christ as being more than a *man*.

And that he did, is yet further certain from what he says of him towards the conclusion of the 3d. Chapter, where he terms him GOD MANIFEST IN THE FLESH, which is giving him a character as far above that of a *mere man*, as the
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Creator is above one of his creatures. The Apostle goes on, *justified in the Spirit*, "whose extraordinary communication (lays an eminent divine) in the midst of all the meanness of human nature in its suffering state; vindicated his high claim and marked him out, in the most illustrious manner, for the divine person he professed himself to be;" *seen of Angels*, who attentively beheld, adored and worshipped him, Heb. i. 6, *preached among the Gentiles*, as the great foundation of their faith and hope, and object of their love, *believed on in the world* as their Redeemer and Saviour, *received up into glory*, far above principalities and powers, and every name that is named.—'If thou put the brethren (Chap. iv. 6,) 'in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a 'good minister of (the *mere man*!) Jesus Christ,— 'nourished up in the words of faith, and of good 'doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained.—And 'Chap. v. 21, I charge thee, before God (the 'omnipresent and omniscient Jehovah) and the 'Lord Jesus Christ, (a *mere man*!)—that thou 'observe these things!—Again Chap. vi. verse 13, 'I give the charge in the sight of God (that infinite, omnipresent, and omnipotent Being) 'who quickeneth all things, and before Jesus 'Christ (a *mere man*, local in his presence, and 'limited in his power) that thou keep the commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until 'the appearing of (this *mere man*) our Lord Jesus 'Christ, which, at the proper season, he shall 'manifest who is the blessed and only Potentate, 'the King of kings, and Lord of lords, who 'only hath immortality, dwelling in the light 'which no man can approach unto, whom no 'man hath seen nor can see, to whom be honour 'and power everlasting! Amen!

The 2d. Epistle to *Timothy* is similar to the first. The same strain of absurdity runs through it also, on the supposition that its author held the doctrine of Christ's mere humanity. A few passages I shall quote and read according to that hypothesis.

Chap. i. 1, 'Paul an Apostle of (the mere man) Jesus Christ, by the will of God, according to the promise of life, which is in (this mere man) Christ Jesus: To *Timothy* my beloved son, grace, mercy and peace, from God, the (infinite and eternal) Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ (a mere man of yesterday, weak and dependent!)—Verse 8, Be not thou ashamed of the testimony of (this mere man) our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but be thou a partaker of the afflictions of the Gospel, according to the power of God.—Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began (though this Christ Jesus be a mere man, who had no existence till the world was at least 4000 years old!) but is now made manifest by the appearing of this (mere man) our Saviour Jesus Christ, who (mere man as he is) hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light, through the Gospel.—Observe, Rev. Sir, a mere man hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light! For which cause, adds he, I also suffer these things; nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that (though a mere man!) he is able to keep, that which I have committed unto him against that day.—I think, Sir, they that believe him to be a mere man, must have many doubts respecting

respecting his ability to keep what they may commit unto him.

The Apostle proceeds Chapter ii. 1, 'Thou therefore, my Son, be strong in the grace that is in (this *mere man*!) Christ Jesus! endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ (the same *mere man*.) No man, that warreth, entangleth himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him that hath chosen him to be a Soldier.' See that thou then (he might have added, as indeed is implied) make it thy care to please the *mere man* Jesus Christ, who hath chosen thee! For thy encouragement let me remind thee that (verse 10,) 'I endure all things, for the elect's sake, that they may obtain the salvation which is in (this *mere man*) Christ Jesus, with eternal glory. It is a faithful saying, if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us: If we believe not, he abideth faithful, he (though a *mere man*!) cannot deny himself. Of these things put them in remembrance!' that is, put them in remembrance that a *mere man* cannot deny himself! Some will think that it is an assertion that requires *proof*, rather than repetition.

As in the words last quoted, the Apostle ascribes *immutability* to this *mere man*, so, verse 19, he ascribes *omniscience* to him. 'The foundation of God, says he, standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his (according to what Jesus himself had testified, John 10, 'I know my sheep, and am known of mine) and let him that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.'—The same attribute is also, in effect, ascribed to him, Chap. iv. 1. But on the *Socinian* hypothesis it must be interpreted as follows: 'I charge thee before God, (that infinite

and eternal Being, who filleth heaven and earth,
 and therefore has his eye upon us both.) ‘and
 ‘the Lord Jesus Christ (that *mere man*, who, being
 now in heaven, and immensely removed from
 our world is an utter stranger to us, and per-
 fectly unacquainted with our behaviour, but)
 ‘who will, however, judge the quick and the dead,
 ‘at his appearing and his kingdom, preach the
 ‘word.—5, Watch in all things;—for, verse
 ‘6, I am now ready to be offered, and the time
 ‘of my departure is at hand: I have fought the
 ‘good fight;—and there is laid up for me a
 ‘crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the
 ‘righteous judge (I mean a *mere man*!) will give
 ‘me at that day, and not to me only, but to all
 ‘them also that love his appearing, (viz. the ap-
 ‘pearing of the same *mere man*!)—18, At my
 ‘my first answer no man stood with me, but the
 ‘Lord (how strange soever it may appear, since
 ‘he is a *mere man*!) stood with me and strength-
 ‘ened me;—and I was delivered out of the
 ‘mouth of the Lion. And the Lord, (the same
 ‘*mere man*!) shall deliver me from every evil
 ‘work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly
 ‘kingdom: to whom, (*mere man* though he be!)
 ‘be glory for ever and ever! (This *mere man*,)
 ‘The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy Spirit!’ and
 yet when I recollect myself, I acknowledge it is
 in vain to expect such a thing, however desira-
 ble it might be, for as his presence is merely
local, and the heavens must receive him until
 the times of the restitution of all things, it is im-
 possible he should either hear or answer any such
 request. I say therefore, ‘Grace be with you!’
 ‘Amen!’

The Epistle to *Titus* being very familiar to the
 two Epistles to *Timothy*, I shall pass it over, re-
 ferring only to one passage, which according to
 Dr.

Dr. Priestley's plan of doctrine must be understood thus, ' Looking for the blessed hope, and ' the glorious appearing of (a *mere man*!) who ' however is, our GREAT GOD AND SAVIOUR, ' *τὸ μέγαλόν θεὸν καὶ σωτῆρα ἡμῶν*, JESUS CHRIST. ' WHO (*mere man* as he is!) GAVE HIMSELF FOR ' us, that he, (a *mere man*, by his laying down a ' temporal life!) might redeem us, (many myriads ' as we are,) from all iniquity and purify to HIM- ' SELF (that is, says Dr. Priestley to a *mere man*!) ' a peculiar people zealous of good works! These ' things (are of deep importance therefore) speak ' and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let ' no man despise thee' for terming a *mere man* the great God our Saviour!

The Epistle to *Philemon* affords several instances of the same kind with those quoted above. ' Paul a prisoner of Jesus Christ, (that is, a prisoner for his attachment to a *mere man*!) Grace ' to you, and peace from God our Father, and ' from the Lord Jesus Christ; (that is, from the ' eternal God and a *mere man*!)—I thank my God, ' hearing of thy love and faith, which thou hast ' toward (that *mere man*) the Lord Jesus:—that ' the communication of thy faith may become ' effectual.' or that thy faith may be effectually communicated to others, ' by the acknowledging, ' (that is, by their acknowledging) of every good ' thing which is in you in Christ Jesus, (that same ' *mere man*!)—Wherefore, though I might be ' bold in (this *mere man*) Christ to enjoin thee ' that which is convenient, yet for love's sake, I ' rather beseech thee, being such a one as Paul ' the aged, and now also a prisoner of (the same ' *mere man*) Jesus Christ:—I beseech thee for my ' son *Onesimus*,—a brother beloved, especially to ' me, and how much more to thee, both in the ' flesh and in the Lord.—Yea, brother, let me have

‘ have joy in thee, in (this mere man, whom I
 ‘ term) the Lord, refresh my bowels in him.—
 ‘ *Epaphras*, my fellow-prisoner in (this same
 ‘ mere man) Christ Jesus, saluteth thee. The grace
 ‘ of our Lord Jesus Christ, (that is, the grace of
 ‘ a mere man!) be with your Spirit! Amen!’

May these blessed words, so often repeated, be at length so considered by Dr. *Priestley* and other Socinians, that they too may see their need of divine grace and begin to apply to Christ for it, though at present they may judge it would be idolatry to do it!—Surely, Rev. Sir, if the sundry passages, produced in this Letter, were attended to, they must convince all candid and unprejudiced persons that, whether St. *Paul* was right or wrong in his views of the Messiah, he certainly had a much higher idea of him, than that of a mere man.

To take no notice of other things,—to appeal to the Lord Jesus as omnipresent, and give *Timothy* repeated charges as in his sight, as well as in the sight of God the Father: to represent him as abolishing death, and bringing life and immortality to light by the Gospel, and as being able to keep what we commit unto him safe unto that day: to exhort *Timothy* to be strong in his grace, to endure hardness as a good soldier of his, and make it his chief care to please him in all things, as the Captain of his salvation who had called him; to represent salvation, in all its branches and eternal glory as being in him, and to be attained only by those who die with him, that may live with him, and suffer with him, that they may reign with him;—to view him as unchangeable and omniscient, as one that abideth faithful and cannot deny himself, as the Lord who knoweth them that are his, and as the righteous Judge who, at the day of his final and glorious coming, will give the crown of
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righteousness to all that love his appearing :—to speak of this Jesus as *standing by him, strengthening and delivering him* when all men forsook him, and to express an entire confidence in him for deliverance from every evil work, and preservation to his heavenly kingdom : and lastly to pray that he would *be with Timothy*, also, and to ascribe glory to him *for ever and ever* :—surely these particulars must demonstrate that St. Paul was as far from believing the doctrine of Christ's *mere humanity*, as he was from being guilty of idolatry himself, or from persuading others to the commission of that dreadful crime.

I am,

Rev. Sir,

Yours, &c.

LETTER

L E T T E R VII.

REV. SIR,

THOUGH it be not certain St. *Paul* wrote the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, yet, you know, it was the most prevailing opinion of the Ancients, as it is still of the Moderns, that he was the Author of that invaluable work. I shall therefore take this for granted. But on the supposition that he was an Unitarian in Dr. *Priestley's* sense of the word, he seems to have paid still less regard to *common sense*, to say nothing of *piety* or *sound reasoning*, in this, than in any of his other Epistles. We need not read far to find instances of the truth of this observation. We meet with them in the very beginning of the Epistle. According to the *Socinian* doctrine he must be interpreted to mean as follows.

' God, who, at sundry times and in divers
' manners; spake in time past unto the Fathers by
' the Prophets, (that is, by *mere men*) hath in
' these last days spoken unto us by his Son (an-
' other *mere man*,) whom (however) he hath ap-
' pointed heir of all things, (viz. of all his works,
' of all creatures visible and invisible !) BY WHOM
' ALSO HE MADE THE WORLDS (though he himself
' had no existence till the worlds had been made at
' least 4000 years !) who (*mere man* as he was, yet)
' being the effulgence of his (the Father's) glory and
' the express image (or exact delineation) of his per-
' son, AND UPHOLDING ALL THINGS BY THE
' WORD OF HIS POWER (even the things that
' had been created and upheld some thousands of
' years before he, a mere man, existed !) when he
' had, BY HIMSELF (viz. by laying down his *mere*
' temporal life,) purged our sins, sat down on the
right

'right hand of the majesty on high. Being
 ' (though a *mere man*, ignorant in many things,
 ' weak and peccable) *so much better than the*
 ' *Angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more*
 ' *excellent name than they.* For unto which of the
 ' Angels said he (the Father) at any time, *Thou*
 ' *art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.* And
 ' again, *I will be to him a Father, and he shall be*
 ' *unto me a Son.* And again, when he bringeth
 ' his first begotten into the world (not that he had
 ' any prior existence) he saith, LET ALL THE
 ' ANGELS OF GOD (be guilty of idolatry, and)
 ' WORSHIP HIM (a *mere man*!)—Of the Angels
 ' he saith, who maketh his Angels Spirits, and his
 ' Ministers a flame of fire. But unto the Son (a
 ' *mere man*!) he saith, THY THRONE, O GOD,
 ' IS FOR EVER AND EVER, a sceptre of righteouf-
 ' ness, is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast
 ' loved righteousness, and hated wickedness, there-
 ' fore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with
 ' the oil of gladness above thy fellows. And
 ' THOU LORD, (a *mere man*, born in the days of
 ' *Augustus*) IN THE BEGINNING HAST LAID THE
 ' FOUNDATION OF THE EARTH; and (though
 ' weak and helpless) THE HEAVENS ARE THE
 ' WORK OF THINE HANDS: *they shall perish, but*
 ' THOU REMAINEST, *yea they all shall wax old as*
 ' *a garment, and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up*
 ' *and they shall be changed, but THOU (though no*
 ' *more than a man) ART THE SAME, AND THY*
 ' YEARS FAIL NOT. And to which of the An-
 ' gels said he at any time (as he hath said to this
 ' *mere man*) *Sit thou on my right hand, till I make*
 ' *thine enemies thy foot-stool.*'

Such, if we believe Dr. Priestley, is the doc-
 trine of the Apostle in the very beginning of
 this Epistle, an Epistle written manifestly with a
 design either to bring over the *Jews*, those great
 advocates

advocates for the unity of God, and the purity of divine worship, to the Christian religion, or to preserve those that were brought over. Even here, and to this people, averse above all others from the very appearance of idolatry, does he hold forth, according to the Doctor, a *mere creature*, yea a *mere man*, as the object of religious worship even to Angels, nay and what is, if not more impious, yet more *absurd* and *ridiculous*, proclaims this *mere creature* this *mere man*, to be the *Maker*, *Upholder*, and *Lord* of the *Universe*. Surely a man must do greater violence to his understanding to entertain error, than to admit the truth!

But to proceed. The Apostle goes on in exactly the same strain of irrational argument, as distant from common sense as from piety. 'Therefore, we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip: for if the word spoken by *Angels* was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation, which at first began to be spoken by (a *mere man*, whom I term) THE LORD and was confirmed unto us, by those (other *mere men*) that heard him?' Again, verse 5, 'For unto the Angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak (as he hath to that *mere man* whom we call the Son!) —We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the Angels, (not that he ever was higher, being only a *mere man*!) for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour, that he, (though a *mere man*) by the grace of God should taste death for every man;' (his single and temporal life, though he was of no higher nature or origin than others, being, it seems, an adequate price for the redemption of the innumerable

merable and eternal lives of all men!) And, verse 14, 'Forasmuch, then, as the children are 'partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself (a 'mere man) likewise took part of the same:' not that it was possible he should have had it in his choice, whether he would take part thereof or not, having had no existence till he was formed in the womb, and grew up in flesh! 'that 'through death he (a mere man) might destroy him 'that had the power of death, that is, the Devil, 'and deliver those who through fear of death, were 'all their life-time subject to bondage. For verily he ' (a mere man!) took not on him the nature of Angels, (or did not take hold on and assume their 'nature into union with himself,) but he (the 'same mere man) took on him, (that is, assumed in- 'to union with himself,) the seed of Abraham,' (viz. that particular seed born of Mary and descended from the Patriarch Abraham: In other words, he, a mere man became a mere man! 'where- 'fore, in all things it behoved him (a mere man, 'begotten by Joseph and conceived and born of 'Mary,) to be made like to his brethren, that he ' (the same mere man) might be a merciful and 'faithful High priest, in things pertaining to God, 'to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself suffered being tempted, he is able (though a mere man, and of consequence immensely removed from his followers, and entirely unacquainted with them,) 'to 'succour them that are tempted!'

Now what strange unintelligible jargon is this! how unworthy, I will not say of the tongue, or of the pen of an Apostle, divinely inspired, but of a human creature endowed with common sense! How *absurd* as well as *false* to represent it as a much greater *crime*, and therefore, as a behaviour that would meet with much more ex-

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emplary

emplary punishment, to neglect the salvation revealed by a mere man, than to disobey the word spoken by glorious Angels!—to speak of this mere man as made a little lower than the Angels, (an expression which plainly implies that he once was higher) in order that, by the grace of God, he might taste death for every man, and to signify that he was now *crowned with glory and honour, the world to come* being put into subjection to him, and not to Angels:—to assure us, that, in as much as we were partakers of flesh and blood, he also took part of the same, a manner of speaking from which it is natural to infer that he had it in his *choice* whether he would take part of flesh and blood or not, and that he acted *voluntarily* in taking part of it, and therefore that he *pre-existed*:—to mention it particularly, as the end of his taking flesh and blood, that he (*a mere man*!) might destroy *Satan*, and deliver mankind from his works, especially from death and the fear of it, to which so many myriads of the human race, are continually subject:—to magnify it as an astonishing instance of his love, that he passed by the nature of Angels and laid hold on sinking men, assuming the human nature into union with himself, and condescending to be made in all things like unto his brethren; and to hold him forth to our view, as being therefore a merciful and faithful High Priest, in things pertaining to God, who both makes reconciliation for the sins of the people, and is able to succour them that are tempted; an expression this which certainly implies his being perfectly acquainted with them and ever at hand to help them, wherever they may be dispersed abroad over the face of the earth; which it is certainly inconceivable that any mere man should be!—Methinks (I say) that as these things, if understood of a mere man,

man, must be false, so to *suppose* them is very ridiculous, and sufficient to discredit any pretences, not only to a supernatural *afflatus*, but even to *ordinary reason and understanding*.

Chap. iii. 3. We meet with a passage still more extraordinary, if considered in this point of view, 'This person, (says the Apostle) was counted 'worthy of more glory than *Moses*, *inasmuch as* HE 'THAT BUILDED THE HOUSE, HATH MORE HO- 'NOUR THAN THE HOUSE: *For every house* is 'buiided by some one, but he, (this *mere man*!) 'that BUILT ALL THINGS IS GOD: And *Moses* 'verily (one mere man) was faithful as a SER- 'VANT,—but Christ (another mere man!) as a 'SON OVER HIS OWN HOUSE, WHOSE HOUSE '(or family) WE ARE, if we hold fast the con- 'fidence and the rejoicing of hope firm un'o the 'end.—For we are *made partakers of* (this *mere* 'man) Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of 'our confidence stedfast unto the end.'

Respecting this remarkable passage, I shall only say, that as certainly as the Author of it compares Christ to *Moses*, and asserts his great superiority to the *Jewish* Lawgiver; so certainly does he signify that that superiority consisted in *two things*: *Moses* was but a *servant* in the family of God, Christ a *son*: *Moses* was the *house itself*, or rather only a *part of it*, but Christ was the builder of the house, yea, is the builder of *all things*, is God. Now, is it possible, on the principles of common sense, to reconcile this doctrine of the Apostle with the supposition of his viewing Christ, whom he thus magnifies, as a *mere man*? Surely, if Christ be a *mere man*, he was and is God's *servant*, and a part of God's house as much as *Moses*.

Pals we on to the 14th verse of the 4th Chapter, where we meet with another paragraph, which

on the principles of common sense, is almost equally irreconcilable with the same doctrine of Christ's *mere humanity*. The Socinian hypothesis requires us to understand it thus: 'Having therefore a great High Priest, that is, passed into the heavens, Jesus THE SON OF GOD (that is, a mere man!) let us hold fast our profession, for we have not an High-Priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, (although it must be granted that being a mere man, he cannot be acquainted with our infirmities!) Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need!'

Still more ridiculous, according to the same doctrine, is the Apostle's language in the 7th Chapter, where he discourses largely on one of the capital doctrines of Christianity, and holds forth the Lord Jesus as an High-Priest for ever after the order of *Melchisedeck*.—Comparing them together, he observes, verse 1st. 'This *Melchisedeck*, king of *Salem*, Priest of the most high God,—first being by interpretation, king of righteousness, and after that also king of *Salem*, which is king of peace, without Father, without Mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the son of God,' who, as Dr. Priestley teaches, is a mere man, and had both a Father and a Mother, and at least beginning of days, if not also end of life. 'For he testifieth, Thou (a mere man!) art a Priest for ever after the order of *Melchisedeck*. Therefore this (mere man) because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable Priesthood. Wherefore (though a mere man!) he is able to save to the uttermost, all that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.—For such an High-Priest became us who
is

‘ is holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from
 ‘ sinners, and (though a *mere man*!) HIGHER
 ‘ THAN THE HEAVENS; who needeth not daily,
 ‘ as those high-priests, to offer up sacrifice, first
 ‘ for his own sins, and then for the people’s: for
 ‘ this he did once when he offered *up himself*: for
 ‘ the Law maketh men High-Priests, who have
 ‘ infirmity, but the word of the oath which was
 ‘ since the Law, maketh the Son,’ viz. a *mere man*
 who, according to Dr. Priestley, had infirmity
 also, and was weak and peccable like others,
 but nevertheless, it seems, ‘ who is consecrated
 ‘ for ever-more!’

Now here I would ask, on the supposition that
 the Author of this Epistle believed Jesus Christ,
 the great High-Priest of our Profession, to be a
 mere man, the proper Son of *Joseph* and *Mary*,
 begotten, conceived and born like other men,
 how came he to avail himself of the silence of the
 Old Testament, respecting the genealogy of *Melchizedeck*,
 in the comparison which he draws be-
 tween him and Christ? How came he to take
 notice of his being *without* (any) *Father*, record-
 ed in the Scripture, *without Mother*, *without de-*
scend, and *his having neither beginning of days*
nor end of life, mentioned in the divine Oracles,
 as circumstances which rendered him a more
 complete type of the Son of God? Certainly, if
 the Son of God be a *mere man*, and the Apostle
 had considered him as such, he must have seen,
 that *Melchizedeck*, would have resembled him
 much more, had all these particulars been other-
 wise; I mean if he had had a *Father* and a *Mother*
 spoken of in the *Jewish* Scriptures, and if the
 beginning of his days, had also been recorded
 there. For, it must be allowed that a man that
 has human Parents, and whose days have had a
 beginning, is, in these respects, a fitter type of

a mere man, conceived and born as all others are, than one who never had any progenitors, and whose days never began to be. And as it is probable that *Melchizedek* was a *real man*, and therefore, that he had both a *Father* and a *Mother*, though that circumstance be not mentioned in the short account *Moses* has given us of him, certainly the Apostle would have taken no notice of these particulars, much less would he have enlarged upon them, as he has done, had he viewed Jesus Christ in the light in which Dr. *Priestley* views him: as it is not to be conceived that any end could be answered by it, unless to mislead people and make them believe, that the *Son of God*, of whom this *Melchizedek* was an illustrious type, was not of this world, nor of any human origin.

I need make no remark upon divers other expressions in the passages quoted above. They speak for themselves, and make it evident that if the Apostle believed Jesus Christ to be a mere man, he strangely forgot his creed, when he wrote these verses, and uttered things, to say the least, very inconsistent with it. For let common sense judge. How can a *mere man*, whose presence is and must be merely *local*, and who is immensely removed from our world, and confined in the third heaven, how can he, I say, be acquainted even with the *persons*, and much more with the *infirmities* of all his followers, nay, and of all mankind in every part of the habitable globe? And how can he be present *with* and *assisting* to every one, that shall apply to him at whatever time or place, giving grace to help in time of need, directing, protecting, strengthening and comforting all in general, and each individual in particular, as their wants and necessities require? I pass by many particulars, also,
in

in the 8th Chapter, in which the Apostle's reasoning is very weak on the *Socinian* hypothesis. Indeed there is hardly any solid argument in the whole Epistle, (though generally considered as the most clear, argumentative and convincing of all *St. Paul's* Epistles) on the supposition that Jesus Christ, the grand subject of it, is no more than a man, weak and peccable like others. On this principle, what shall we make of his doctrine respecting the Priesthood of Christ, as displayed at large in the 9th and 10th Chapters? Here, methinks, he especially answers the character Dr. *Priestley* gives him, and stands forth as an *inconclusive reasoner*. If the Doctor be right, he reasons as follows:—

Chap. ix. 11, 'Christ being come an High Priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect Tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building, neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, (*viz.* the blood of a *mere man*!) he entered in once into the holy place, having (by that means) obtained eternal redemption for us.—For if the blood of bulls and goats, and the ashes of an heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, (the blood of one *mere man*!) who through the eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot to God, purge your consciences from dead works to serve the living God.'

Chap. x. 4, 'It is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sin.—Wherefore when he (a *mere man*, who had no prior existence!) cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared me!—Then said I (before I existed!) lo! I come (to enter that body

'body and) do thy will, O God!—By the which
 'will we are sanctified, by the offering of the body
 'of Jesus Christ (the body of one *mere man*) once
 'for all,—*body*, I say, but I do not mean by this,
 that he had any *soul*, any more than a superior
 or divine nature.—No, like other *mere men*,
 he was *all body*, wholly made of matter without
spirit!—'But he (or, *autos*, this person) after he
 'had offered one sacrifice for sin for ever sat
 'down on the right hand of God, from hence-
 'forth expecting till his enemies (whether evil
 'men, or evil angels) be made his footstool, (viz.
 'the footstool of a *mere man*!)—For by one offer-
 'ing he (a *mere man*) hath perfected for ever them
 'that are sanctified! Verse 19, Having therefore,
 'brethren, boldness, (or liberty) to enter into
 'the holiest by the blood of Jesus (the blood of a
 ' *mere man*!) by a new and living way which he
 '(a *mere man*!) hath consecrated for us;—and
 'having (the same *mere man*) an High Priest over
 'the house of God;—Let us draw near with a
 'true heart, in full assurance of faith, having
 'our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience.—
 'For if we sin wilfully after that we have received
 'the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no
 'more sacrifice for sin (but that which we reject)—
 'He that despised *Moses*' Law, died without mercy
 'under two or three witnesses;—of how much
 'sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought
 'worthy, who hath trodden under foot (one *mere*
 '*man*, whom I term) the *Son of God*, and hath
 'counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith
 'he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath
 'done despite unto the spirit of grace.'

I think no one will wonder that they who re-
 ject the whole doctrine of the Divinity, and
 Atonement of Christ, together with the influence
 the Holy Spirit of God, should consider the
 Author

Author of this Epistle as writing without inspiration, and as reasoning very inconclusively. But, what will they say to that passage in the 11th Chapter, where the Apostle informs us, that *Moses* esteemed the reproach of Christ, (that is, the reproach of a *mere man* who had no existence till about 2000 years after that time, that he esteemed this reproach, I say) greater riches than the treasures of *Egypt*?

Chapter 12. The Apostle exhorts us to 'look to this (mere man) Jesus,' and terms him, (though a *mere man*)—'the *Author and Finisher* of our faith,'—and tells us, 'he is set down on the right hand of the Throne of God.'—and, Ver. 25, bids us see that we refuse him not, for, adds he, 'if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, (the *mere man*, *Moses*) much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him, who (though he speaketh from heaven, is however but another *mere man*!) whose voice then, (*viz.* 2000 years before he had any being!) shook the earth: but, now he hath promised, saying, yet once more I shake not only the earth, but heaven also!'—(This mere man) Chap. xiii. 8. 'Jesus Christ, is the same yesterday, to day, and for ever,' (for, though a *mere man*, he is *immutable*) and, verse 12, 'That he might sanctify the people with his own blood, he suffered without the gate: Let us go forth, therefore, unto him, without the camp, bearing his reproach, and by him (*mere man* as he is!) let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually;—that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name. Now, the God of peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus (who, though but a *mere man*, is however) the great Shepherd of the Sheep, (omniscient to know, and omnipresent to oversee and protect them all!) through the blood of the everlasting

‘ everlasting covenant; make you perfect in every
‘ good work to do his will, working in you that
‘ which is well pleasing in his sight; through Jesus
‘ Christ, (the same mere man) to whom (*mere man*)
‘ as he is) be glory for ever, and ever! Amen!”—
I hope, Rev. Sir, if Dr. *Priestley* deem this to be
good sense, and sound doctrine, he will have no
objection to join with the Apostle in this doxo-
logy, and add his hearty *Amen* to St. Paul’s,
ascribing glory to this mere man for ever, and
ever!

I am,

Rev. Sir,

Your’s, &c.

LETTER

LETTER VIII.

REV. SIR,

HOWEVER difficult a task Dr. Priestley may find it, to reconcile the Epistles of St. Paul, with common sense, on the supposition of that Apostle's holding the doctrine of Christ's mere humanity, I am persuaded he will find it equally difficult, to reconcile therewith, the Epistles of the other Apostles, supposing them also to have been of the same opinion. In proof of this, I shall lay before you a few passages, extracted from their Writings also, referring you to the original Epistles, for further satisfaction. St. James, it is true, speaks but little of Christ, but nevertheless, what he does speak, shews, either that he was not an Unitarian in the Doctor's sense of the word, or that he had little regard to common sense, in writing his Epistle. He not only styles himself a servant of God, but also of the Lord Jesus Christ, that is, as the Doctor will have it, of a mere man! And, the next time he mentions his name, which is in the beginning of the 2d Chapter, he assures us he is the Lord of glory: that is, on the Doctor's hypothesis, a mere man is THE LORD OF GLORY! 'Be patient, brethren, (says he, Chap. v. 7.) unto the coming of the Lord, (that is the coming of a mere man) stablish your hearts, the coming of the Lord (the same mere man) draweth nigh. And grudge not one against another,—lest ye be condemned;—Behold, the Judge, (a mere man!) standeth at the door.

St. Paul,

St. *Peter* furnishes us with many more examples than St. *James*, either of the erroneousfness of the Socinian Doctrine, or of his own absurdity. “*Peter*, an Apostle of Jesus Christ, (that is, says Dr. *Priestley*, an Apostle of a mere man!) to the strangers,—elect, according to the foreknowledge of God, the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus,” that is, the blood of a mere man! Here, St. *Peter* speaks like a Trinitarian. He both names the three that bear record in heaven, and attributes unto each his proper office and work in the economy of our redemption. He ascribes our election to God the Father, who, in his divine foreknowledge, marks from the beginning, who will accept of salvation in the only way in which it can be accepted, the way of repentance and faith, and *elects* or chuses such for his children. He imputes our redemption to the Son of God, Jesus Christ, whose body offered up upon the cross as a sacrifice for sin, makes a onement, and the sprinkling of whose blood gives at once peace with God, and peace of conscience to the truly penitent and believing soul. And, he attributes our sanctification to the Holy Spirit, whose heavenly influence upon the mind, both breaks the power and purges away the defilement of sin, at the same time that he inspires us with love, joy and peace, with holiness and happiness, and gives us to know that his genuine fruit is in all goodness, righteousness and truth.

The second of these persons, against whom Dr. *Priestley* seems to have a peculiar enmity, and who, he thinks, is far too much exalted, when “advanced to the high rank of the first and principal emanation of the Deity, the *vous* or *λογος* of the *Platonists*, and the *δημιουργος*, under God, “in making the world,” as being, he believes, a
mere

mere man; this person, I say, even *Jesus, the Son of God*, is represented by *St. Peter*, a few verses after, as the great object of the faith and love of the saints, and the source of unspeakable joy to them. 'Whom having not seen, ye love, (ver. 8.) in whom, though now you see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, receiving the end of your faith, the salvation of your souls.' And, is he a *mere man*, whom they thus love, though they have not seen him, and in whom they rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory? Is he a *mere man*, whose Spirit, as the Apostle observes in the following verses, *was in the ancient Prophets*, and spoke by them, and who hath redeemed us, not with corruptible things, such as silver and gold, but with his own precious blood, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot, who verily was fore-ordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for us? Surely, if he be, *St. Peter* must have mistaken his character, and have viewed him in a very different light.

This appears still more manifest from the next Chapter:—'As new-born babes, says he, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby; if so be that ye have tasted that the Lord, (a *mere man*, shall I say?) is gracious.'—That he means Christ, is plain from the following words:—'To whom coming as unto a living stone, disallowed, indeed, of men, but chosen of God and precious, ye also as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy Priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God, by Jesus Christ,' that is, says *Dr. Priestley*, by a *mere man*! 'Wherefore, also, it is contained in the Scripture, Behold, I lay in Zion, a chief corner stone, elect, precious, and he that believ-

'eth on him (that believeth on a *mere man*) shall
 'not be confounded. Unto you, therefore, that
 'believe, he, (this *mere man*!) is precious; but,
 'unto them that be disobedient, the stone which
 'the builders disallowed, the same, (*mere man*!)
 'is made the head of the corner, and a
 'stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, to
 'them, who, disobeying the word, stumble.' I
 ask again, can it be supposed, that St. *Peter* con-
 sidered the person of whom he spake, in these
 words, as being a *mere man*? The person whom
 he thus represents as the *one foundation* of the
 Church, and of every member thereof? to whom
 he applies the words of *Isaiah*, in the 8th Chap-
 ter of his Prophecy, manifestly meant of *Jehovah*?
 The LORD, whom true believers TASTE TO BE
 GRACIOUS, to whom they come as to a living stone,
 upon whom they are built up, and trusting in whom
 they shall never be confounded?—I ask further, is
 he a *mere man*, who, as we learn, verse 24, &c.
 HIS OWN SELF BEARS OUR SINS on his own body,
 as the tree, HEALS us by his stripes, and undertakes
 to be the Shepherd and Bishop of all our Souls,
 many thousands and myriads, as we are, dispersed
 over the whole world. Methinks, he who will
 affirm this, may as well affirm St. *Peter* to be an
 idiot, or beside himself.

But, there is no end of the absurdity of sup-
 posing the New Testament Writers to hold the
 doctrine of Christ's *mere humanity*. We have
 only to read a few verses further, and we are
 informed of this *mere man* preaching in the days
 of *Noah*, by his Spirit, to those, who, indeed,
 are now in prison, but were formerly disobedient,
 when once the long-suffering of God waited for
 the repentance of the old world; and, a verse or
 two after, are assured that he 'is gone into heaven,
 'and is on the right hand of God, Angels, and
 'Authorities

' Authorities and Powers, being made subject unto
' him,' that is subject to a *mere man* ! and, Chap.
v. 11. find the Apostle ascribing to him, PRAISE
and DOMINION FOR EVER AND EVER, con-
firming his doxology, by a *solemn* and *heartly*
AMEN !

The second Epistle of St. *Peter* is exactly of a
piece with the first. It also contains divers pas-
sages utterly irreconcilable with common sense,
on the supposition that the Author of it believed
the Lord Jesus Christ to be a *mere man*. The
following, which I shall barely quote and inter-
pret, according to the *Socinian* hypothesis, leaving
it to the reader to make his observations upon
them, seem very remarkable. ' *Simon Peter*, a
' servant and an Apostle of Jesus Christ,' that is
of a *mere man* !—' to them that have obtained like
' precious faith with us, through the righteousness
' of God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ,' that is
of the *infinite Jehovah*, and a *mere man* ! or rather,
according to the *Greek*, *through the righteousness of*
OUR GOD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST, who,
however, is a *mere man* ! ' Grace and peace be
' multiplied unto you, through the knowledge of
' God, (*self-existent, independent, supreme, and*
' *eternal*) and of Jesus our Lord, a *weak, peccable,*
' and *mortal man* !')

For, (verse 16.) ' We have not followed cun-
' ningly devised fables, when we made known
' unto you the power and coming of (this
' *mere man*) our Lord Jesus Christ, but were
' eye-witnesses of his majesty, μεγαλειότης
' (the majesty of a *mere man* !) For, (though a
' *mere man*) he received from God the Father,
' honour and glory, when there came such a
' voice from the excellent glory, This (*mere man* !)
' is my beloved Son, in whom (*mere man*, though
' he be, weak and peccable !) I am well pleased.

‘ And this voice, which came from heaven, we heard
 ‘ when we were with him in the holy mount.’

Let the reader observe the following prediction.
 How applicable to the Doctrine we oppose!—

Chap. ii. ‘ But there were false Prophets among
 ‘ the people, even as there shall be false teachers
 ‘ among you, who privily shall bring in damnable
 ‘ heresies, even denying the Lord, that bought
 ‘ them, and bringing upon themselves swift de-
 ‘ struction. And many shall follow their pernicious
 ‘ ways, by reason of whom the way of
 ‘ truth shall be evil spoken of.’—Would not one
 suppose that the Apostle was describing the present
 times here? For (ver 20) ‘ if after they have
 ‘ escaped the pollutions of the world, through
 ‘ the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus
 ‘ Christ, (that is the knowledge of a *mere man*!)
 ‘ they are again entangled therein and overcome,
 ‘ the latter end is worse with them than the beginning.’

Chap. iii. ‘ This 2d Epistle, beloved, I write
 ‘ unto you,—that ye may be mindful of the
 ‘ words which were spoken before by the holy
 ‘ Prophets, and of the commandments of us, the
 ‘ Apostles of the Lord and Saviour, (that is, the
 ‘ Apostles of a *mere man*!) knowing that there
 ‘ shall come, in the last days, scoffers walking
 ‘ after their own lusts, and saying, where is the
 ‘ promise of his coming? (that is the coming of a
 ‘ *mere man*!) But, the Lord, (*viz.* the same *mere*
 ‘ *man*!) is not slack concerning his promise
 ‘ (to fulfil it) but is long-suffering to usward,
 ‘ not willing that any should perish, but that
 ‘ all should come to repentance. But the
 ‘ day of the Lord (that is the day of a *mere*
 ‘ *man*!) will come, as a thief in the night,
 ‘ in which the heavens will pass away with a
 ‘ great noise.—Nevertheless we, according to his
 ‘ promise (the promise of the same *mere man*!)
 ‘ look

‘ look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein
 ‘ dwelleth righteousness.—Wherefore, beloved,
 ‘ seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent
 ‘ that ye may be found of him, (that is found of a
 ‘ *mere man*!) in peace, without spot and blame-
 ‘ less. And account that the long-suffering of our
 ‘ Lord, (*viz.* the long-suffering of a *mere man*!)
 ‘ is salvation.—And grow in grace and in the
 ‘ knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus
 ‘ Christ (that is, in the knowledge of a *mere*
 ‘ *man*!) To him, that is, to a *mere man*!) be glory,
 ‘ both now and for ever!’

Methinks, Rev. Sir, were there no other argu-
 ment to prove that the Lord Jesus Christ is
 more than a mere man, these *doxologies* are suffi-
 cient to evince it. For, if it be not idolatry to
 to ascribe glory to a *mere man*, or *mere creature*, I
 confess I know not what is. Leaving you to
 adore with me the wisdom and goodness of God,
 in furnishing us with so many and such incon-
 testable proofs of the falsity of a doctrine, which
 of all others, is the most inimical to our peace,
 and our best interests, in time and in eternity,

I remain,

Rev. Sir,

Yours, &c.

LETTER IX.

REV. SIR,

WE come now to the Epistles of St. John, I think Dr. Priestley has not pronounced him to be an *inconclusive reasoner*. But if, as he supposes, that Apostle considered our Lord as a *mere man*, he is certainly as much entitled to that character as St. Paul himself. He begins his first Epistle by terming the Lord Jesus the *Word of Life*, the *Life* and the *Eternal Life*, appellations which certainly but ill agree with the character of a *mere man*. He informs us, that he was *with the Father from the beginning*, though it were only in these latter ages, that he was *manifested in the flesh to us*, and assures us that, notwithstanding he was now returned to the Father from whom he came, and was no longer visible among his disciples as formerly, yet that they had still fellowship with him as well as with the infinite and eternal Father. 'That which *was from the beginning*, says he, which we have *seen with our eyes*, which we have looked *upon*, and our hands have handled, of the *WORD OF LIFE*: For the *LIFE* was manifested, *and we have seen it and bear witness*, and shew *unto you that ETERNAL LIFE, which was with the Father*, and was manifested to us:—That which *we have seen and heard*, declare we unto you, *that ye also may have fellowship with us*, and *truly our fellowship is with the Father*, and *with his Son Jesus Christ*.' Now, is it of a *mere man*, that all this is spoken? Is a *mere man* the *Word of Life*, the *Life*, the *Eternal Life*? Was a *mere man with the Father*, before his manifestation in the flesh? yea, from the beginning? Can a *mere man*, while with God, in the third heaven,

be

he nevertheless present with men on earth, so that his true followers may have union and communion with him? And, can the blood of a *mere man*, as he affirms, verse 7, *cleanse from all sin*? Or, as he declares in the 2d verse of the next Chapter, can a *mere man* be a *propitiation for our sins*, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world? Surely, to suppose these things, is most ridiculous.

In the following verses he repeatedly calls the commandments of God *his* (Christ's) commandments, and the word of God *his* word; and, (verse 12) assures the children of God, that their sins are forgiven for *his name's sake*, that is, as Dr. Priestley will have it, for the *name's sake* of a *mere man*! And, (verse 22) associating him with the eternal Father, he testifies that 'he is Antichrist, 'that denieth the Father and the Son, (that is, according to the Doctor's hypothesis, that denieth the eternal God and a *mere man*!) 'Whosoever, 'proceeds he, denieth the Son (denieth a *mere man*!) the same hath not the Father. If that 'which ye have heard from the beginning 'remain in you, ye also shall continue in the 'Son and the Father (that is in a *mere man*, and 'in the Eternal God!)—These things have I 'written unto you, concerning them that seduce 'you.—And now, little children, abide in him, '(the same *mere man*!) that when he shall appear, 'we may have confidence, and not be ashamed 'before him (a *mere man*!) at his coming.—If ye 'know that he is righteous, ye know that every 'one that doeth righteousness is born of him;' (*viz. of a mere man*!)

Hence, it appears, that according to St. John, on the Socinian principles, a *mere man* is the author of our regeneration! We are born of the spirit of a *mere man*! An extraordinary doctrine indeed! And yet not more extraordinary than the

the doctrine taught us by the same Apostle, in the following Chapter, concerning Christ's being *manifested to take away our sins*, and to *destroy the works of the Devil*; a doctrine which never can be reconciled with the notion of Christ's mere humanity, on the principles of common sense. For, as the expression, *He was manifested*, plainly implies, that he existed before such manifestation, so the declaration of the *end* for which he was manifested bespeaks him more, I will not say, than a *mere man*, but more than a *mere creature*. For, how can a *mere man*, or *mere creature* take away our sins, or destroy the Devil's works?

But let us pass on to the famous passage, in which this Apostle professedly characterizes the *spirit of truth*, and the *spirit of error*, and let us see how it reads, if understood, according to the Socinian doctrine. Chap. iv. 1. 'Beloved, believe
' not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they
' be of God; because many false Prophets are
' gone out into the world. Hereby, know we
' the Spirit of God. Every Spirit that confesseth
' that Jesus Christ (that is, that a *mere man*) is come
' in the flesh, is of God. And, every Spirit that
' confesseth not that Jesus Christ (the same *mere*
' *man*!) is come in the flesh, is not of God. And
' this is that spirit of Antichrist, whereof ye have
' heard that it should come, and even now already
' it is in the world.' Now, what a strange and uncouth phraseology is this, which, on the Doctor's principles, the Apostle uses? Who ever expressed himself in such a manner before? Who ever, speaking of the *birth* of a *mere man*, said *he came in the flesh*? Certainly, such a form of expression is unexampled in any Author, ancient or modern, sacred or profane. The reason is plain: a *mere man* must come *in the flesh*, if he come at all: he cannot come, or be born into the world otherwise.

It

It is therefore unnecessary, and indeed ridiculous to mention that circumstance. It is just as if one were to say a man came clothed with skin, or with an head upon his body.

But, to use such a phraseology concerning a being that might come otherwise, concerning an *Angel*, for instance, or a *departed spirit*, would be at least good sense : to say that *Gabriel* came in the *flesh*, or that *Elijah*, or *Moses* rose again, and came in the *flesh*, however the assertion might offend our faith, by its *falsehood*, it would not shock our common sense, by its *absurdity* : It would be only like saying, a man came clothed in scarlet, which was a circumstance that might properly be mentioned, as he might have come clothed in raiment of another colour. Just so, the Apostle's relating and solemnly testifying that Christ came in the *flesh*, as it was a fact true in itself, so it was very necessary it should be mentioned, it being very possible, nay, and *likely*, that he should come otherwise, even without flesh, in the *spirit*, in his spiritual and divine nature, as indeed he had come from the beginning, whether to the Patriarchs, in the early ages of the world, or to his Church in the wilderness, and to his Prophets in after times.

But, says the Doctor, Hist. of Cor. P. 142.
 " This doctrine has staggered many, when they
 " reflect coolly upon the subject, to think that so
 " exalted a Being as this, an Unique in the creation,
 " (an *only one*) a Being, next in dignity and intelligence to God himself, (he should rather say, *one with God*) possessed of powers absolutely incomprehensible by us, should inhabit this particular spot of the universe, in preference to any other in the whole extent of, perhaps, boundless creation." It is worthy of observation, here, that the very doctrine, which staggers the

the Doctor, and his friends, and seems so perfectly incredible to them, is the grand subject of all St. *John's* writings, and furnishes him, (as it does the other Apostles) with matter for the highest admiration and praise! ' In this, says he, (Chap. iv. 9) ' was manifested the love of God towards us, ' because that God sent his only begotten Son (an ' Unique in the creation, *an only one*, as Dr. ' *Priestley* terms him) into the world, that we might ' live through him. Herein is love, not that we ' loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his ' Son to be the propitiation for our sins! Beloved, ' if God so loved us, we ought also to love one ' another.—We have seen, and do testify, that the ' Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the ' world.'

Though, as the Doctor expresses it (*ibid*) " he " existed before all creatures, yea, from Eternity, " by an eternal derivation from his eternal Father," though " he was the immediate Maker of the " world, and of all things visible and invisible, " and appeared in a divine character to the Patri- " archs and Prophets," yet, that he was born of the virgin *Mary*, and made man, is a doctrine which is now and has been in every age, since Christianity was first established in the world, the grand foundation, as well as object of the faith of the people of God, the source of their love, and matter of their wonder and praise.—That the *Logos*, the *Wisdom* and *Word*, which was in the beginning with God and was God, that *Wisdom* and *Word*, by which all things were made, hath been made flesh, and hath dwelt among us, while men beheld his glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth! That when he was rich for our sakes he became poor, that we, through his poverty, might be made rich! —That when in the form of God, and, as the
Apostle

Apostle declares, equal with God, as being his very Word and Wisdom, he emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men! that, when he was found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself still further, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross!—This great mystery of godliness, while it hath filled them with wonder and amazement, at the condescension and love of this divine and adorable Saviour, hath convinced them that, mean and worthless as they are, when compared with creatures of a more exalted rank, they are, however, not overlooked by their Maker, amidst the immensity of his nobler works. On the contrary, they see that they stand high in his esteem, and are the objects of his peculiar love, and tender compassions.

What God may, or may not have done for other creatures, in other worlds, they know not, and therefore pretend not to say, but they do not think their ignorance in this point, can justify their disbelieving a fact sufficiently authenticated, and, in consequence thereof, their ungratefully rejecting what, they have good proof, God, in infinite goodness, hath done for themselves, though they may not be able to assign a reason for his preferring of them to others, should there be a preference in the case. They consider that other Beings, in other worlds, either may not have fallen as they have done, and, therefore, may not have needed to be visited, in a similar manner, by a divine Redeemer; or, if they have, that some circumstances in their case might render their defection more inexcusable, and that therefore the divine wisdom might not see fit to afford them the help he hath afforded man, formed out of the dust of the earth, weak and frail, even in his best estate, and seduced by the
subtily

subtily and fraud of his more powerful and crafty adversary.

Be this as it will, their firm belief of a mystery they cannot fathom, that *God has been manifest in the flesh*; that to them a child has been born, to them a Son has been given, whose name is *wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace, Immanuel, God with us*;—their conviction of this, I say, while it lays a foundation for the most absolute confidence in, and entire dependance upon their God and Saviour for whatever they want for time and eternity; it binds their hearts to him, as by a thousand ties, and becomes a most powerful and perpetual obligation to love and obedience. This *love of Christ constraineth them, while they thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead, and that he died for all, that they who live, (viz. who live through his death) should not, henceforth, live unto themselves, but to him that died for them, and rose again.* In the mean time, that *the Father sent the Son, his living Word and Wisdom, to be the Saviour of the world, that he so loved the world as to give his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life*, is matter of equal praise, and equally excites their admiration, and provokes their gratitude. And, while, with *St. Paul*, they render thanks unto God for his unspeakable gift, they see every reason to conclude with the same inspired Apostle, that *he who hath not withheld his own Son, but hath freely delivered him up unto death for us all, will, with him, also freely give us all things!* Thus, the doctrine of the incarnation of the divine Word, though a subject of cavil, to the reasoning pride of vain and all assuming Philosophy, is a firm ground of confidence, and perpetual source of consolation to the humble and devout follower of Jesus, the
little

little child, to whom it hath pleased our heavenly Father, the Lord of heaven and earth, to reveal those things which he hath hid from the wise and prudent !

But, says the Doctor, (ibid) " it cannot but be " thought a little extraordinary, that there should " be no trace of the Apostles having ever regarded " their Master in this high light. For, being Jews, " they would certainly consider him, at first, as a " man, like themselves, since no Jew ever expected " any other for their Messiah. Indeed, it can " never be thought that *Peter* and others would " have made so free with our Lord, as they some- " times did, if they had considered him as their " Maker." In answer to this, I would observe, what sort of a Messiah the Jews expected may be gathered, not only from the Scriptures of the Prophets, which gave birth to that expectation, but from the ancient *Chaldee*, or *Jewish Paraphrase* on those Scriptures, which expresses their faith, at the very time when the Messiah was expected. Not to refer to any other passage, their comment on *Isaiah ix. 6*, is sufficient to put this matter beyond dispute, and is as follows, " The Prophet saith " to the house of *David*, that a child is born to " us, a Son is given to us, and he hath taken the " Law upon himself, that he might keep it ; and, " his name shall be called *God*, before the face (or " from the face) of the admirable Counsel ; the " Man that abideth for ever ; the Messiah, " whose peace shall be multiplied upon us in " his days."

As to the Apostles, whether there be " any " trace of their having ever regarded their Master " in this high light," the present quotations from their writings shew. And, as to *St. Peter*, in particular, once a Jew, and no doubt well acquainted with the notions of his countrymen, respecting the person and office of the Messiah,

he hath spoken for himself already. In what light he might view his Master, when he first became his disciple, I will not say, but that he considered him as more than a man, when he wrote his Epistles, is evident, from the many passages we have quoted from them; which, if understood of a mere man, appear to be absolute nonsense.

The same must be said of the Epistles of the other Apostles. Many passages in them all, as these Letters demonstrate, are truly nonsensical, if interpreted of a *mere man*; and these, not a few detached and unconnected sentences, but whole *paragraphs* and *sections*, yea, entire *chapters*, the principal doctrine of which is most irrational, as well as the argumentation perfectly inconclusive, on the *Socinian* hypothesis. For instance, what makes a greater figure in the writings of St. *John*, or is more frequently mentioned or expatiated upon, than the doctrine of the great love of God, manifested in his sending his Son into the world, that we might live through him. But, if what he advances, upon this subject, be understood of a *mere man*, how unworthy is it, I will not say of the *inspiration* of an *Apostle*, but of the reason and common sense of a *man*? We need not go far to seek examples of this. I appeal to the passage last quoted. Only suppose it to be spoken of a *mere man*, and how insipid and unmeaning! nay, how absurd and ridiculous does it appear! ‘ In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God sent (a mere man, whom I term) his only begotten Son into the world, (not that we are to suppose he had any existence prior to his being sent) that we might live through him, (that is, through his teaching and example!) Herein is love! not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent (a mere man called) his

' his Son, to be the propitiation for our sins,' that is, (says the Doctor) to die a martyr to confirm his doctrine! ' Beloved, if God so loved us,' (and sent a mere man among us, to teach us his will!) ' we ought, also, to love one another!—We have ' seen, and do testify, that the Father sent the Son, (I mean, that the Eternal God sent a mere man!) ' to be the Saviour of the world!' one mere man, to save the whole human race!

The doctrine of the next Chapter is yet more irrational, if more can be. Thus, ver. 5, ' Who ' is he that overcometh the world, but he that ' believeth that Jesus, (a mere man!) is, (by adoption) the Son of God?—This is he, (the mere ' man) that came by water and blood; even Jesus, ' not by water only (in which he was baptised; an emblem of his own purity, and our regeneration,) ' but by water and blood,' (atoning blood, the blood of one mere man, shed for the sins of millions!) ' and, it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth. For, there are ' THREE that bear record in heaven, the FATHER, ' the WORD, and the HOLY GHOST, (that is, on the Socinian principles, the self-existent Jehovah, a mere man, and the power of God!) ' And, these ' three are one! (the Eternal God, his power, and a mere man, are one!) ' This is the record, that ' God hath given to us eternal life, and this life ' is in his Son, (is in a mere man!) He that hath ' the Son, (that hath this mere man, dwelling in him! see 2 Cor. xiii. 5.) hath life, and he that ' hath not the Son God, (that hath not this mere man dwelling in him!) hath not life.—Ver. 20. ' We know that the Son of God is come (that is, that a mere man hath been raised up to instruct us) ' and (though a mere man!) hath given us ' an understanding to know him that is true, ' and we are in him that is true, in, or by ' his Son Jesus Christ (a mere man.) He, (the

‘*mere man*, I speak of) is the TRUE GOD, and
 ‘ETERNAL LIFE! (But, though I give these high
 ‘titles to a *mere man*, yet, let me add,) Little
 ‘Children, keep yourselves from idols!’—A
 necessary caution indeed! but very absurd in this
 connexion.

The 2d Epistle he inscribes to the elect Lady,
 (or, as some rather think it should be rendered to
 to the elect *Kuria*, making *Kuria* a proper name)
 and, like St. Paul, he prays for grace, mercy, and
 peace, from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus
 Christ;—that is, on the Unitarian hypothesis,
 from the *supreme God*, and a *mere man*! ‘Many
 ‘Deceivers, (says he, ver. 7,) are entered into the
 ‘world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come
 ‘in the flesh;’ I speak of that *mere man*, born in
Bethlehem, who, having no pre-existence, must
 come in the flesh, or not at all: ‘This is a de-
 ‘ceiver, and Antichrist.—Whosoever trans-
 ‘gresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of
 ‘Christ, (the doctrine of a *mere man*!) hath not
 ‘God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ,
 ‘hath both the Father and the Son, (both the
 ‘*eternal God*, and a *mere man*!) If there come any
 ‘unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive
 ‘him not into your house, neither bid him, God
 ‘speed. For, he that biddeth him, God speed, is
 ‘a partaker of his evil deeds!’ How far this
 caution concerns the abettors of the doctrine of
 Christ’s *mere humanity*, the reader must judge.

The short Epistle of *Jude* is of a piece with the
 Epistles of the other Apostles. It is also written
 without *common sense*, as certainly as without *inspi-
 ration*, on the supposition that he believed Jesus
 Christ to be a *mere man*. ‘*Jude*, the Servant of
 ‘Jesus Christ, (that is the Servant of a *mere man*)
 ‘To them that are sanctified by God the Father,
 ‘and preserved in (the same *mere man*) Jesus
 Christ,

Christ, and called ' Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you, of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints. For there are certain men crept in unawares,—denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ, (that is, denying the infinite Jehovah, and a mere man!)—verse 14. Enoch, also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold the Lord, (that is a mere man!) cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all.—But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the Apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, (viz. the Apostles of a mere man!)—Ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, (the mercy of a mere man!) unto eternal life.' Praying, Rev. Sir, that this mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, which St. Jude mentions may be extended to Dr. Priestley also, although he takes such pains to persuade himself and others, that it is but the mercy of a mere man; and that whatever strange and unscriptural speculations, he may amuse himself and others withal, he may not live and die without this experimental and practical acquaintance with the Trinity, spoken of in these words;—

I remain,

Rev. Sir,

Your's, &c.

L E T T E R X.

REV. SIR,

I N the foregoing Letters I have reviewed all the Epistles of the New Testament, and have selected most of the Texts, in which the Lord Jesus is spoken of, and, methinks, every reasonable man must allow that they are all *absurd*, and the greatest part of them even *profane*, on supposition that he is a mere man. The same observation may be extended to the other books of the New Testament. They also contain sundry passages, which, to say the least, are very ridiculous, and manifest either, that the Authors of them were not *Unitarians*, in the *Socinian* sense of the word, or that they were wanting in *common sense*. In many of these passages our Lord Jesus Christ himself speaks, either while on earth, or after his ascension into heaven. So that, if Dr. *Priestley's* doctrine be true, the Lord Jesus Christ himself (I speak it with reverence) was as much wanting, in common sense, as any of his Apostles, and his doctrine, like their's, is absurd and impious. Permit me, Rev. Sir, before I conclude, to give you, in one or two Letters more, a few instances of the truth and propriety of this remark. But, as I have already enlarged so much, they shall be very few, in comparison of what might be produced, and shall be chiefly taken from the Gospel of St. *John*, and the Revelation of Jesus Christ, communicated to him. In the latter Book, we meet with the following passages, among others.

' *John*, to the seven churches which are in *Asia*.
 ' — Grace be unto you, and peace from him who
 ' is, and who was, and who is to come, (*viz.* from
 ' the

' the eternal God) and from the seven Spirits which
 ' are before his throne, (*viz.* the Holy Ghost,
 ' whose operations are manifold) and from Jesus
 ' Christ (a mere man!) who is the faithful witness,
 ' the first-begotten from the dead, and the prince
 ' of the kings of the earth:—Unto him, (the *mere*
 ' *man!*) that hath loved us, and washed us from
 ' our sins in his own blood, and made us kings
 ' and priests unto God and his Father, to him,
 ' (*mere man*, as he is!) be glory and dominion for
 ' ever and ever! Amen! Behold, he (a *mere man!*)
 ' cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see
 ' him, and they also that pierced him, and all kin-
 ' dreds of the earth shall wail because of him!
 ' even so, Amen!—ver. 9. I, *John*, who also am
 ' your brother and companion in tribulation, and
 ' in the kingdom and patience of Jesus, (the king-
 ' dom and patience of a mere man!) was in the
 ' *Isle of Patmos* for the word of God, and for the
 ' testimony of Jesus Christ (the testimony of a
 ' mere man!) I was in the spirit on the Lord's
 ' day (the day of the same mere man!) and heard
 ' behind me a great voice as of a Trumpet, saying,
 ' I (a mere man) am Alpha and Omega, the first
 ' and the last!—and, I turned to see the voice
 ' that spake with me, and being turned, I saw
 ' seven golden Candlesticks, and in the midst of
 ' the seven golden Candlesticks, one like the Son
 ' of Man:—his head and his hair were white,
 ' like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were
 ' as a flame of fire; and his feet like unto fine
 ' brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voic
 ' as the sound of many waters: And he had
 ' in his right hand seven stars, and out of his
 ' mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and his
 ' countenance was as the sun shineth in his
 ' strength. And when I saw him, (though he be
 ' a *mere man!*) I fell at his feet, as dead: and he
 laid

‘laid his right hand upon me, saying, unto me,
 ‘Fear not, I (a *mere man!*) am the first and the
 ‘last! I am he that liveth and was dead, and
 ‘behold, I am alive for evermore. Amen! and
 ‘have the keys of death, and of Hell!’—I do not
 wonder that Dr. *Priestley* doubts the Authenticity
 of the Apocalypse.

Proceed we to Chap. v. 5. One of the Elders
 said unto me, ‘Weep not, behold the *Lion* of the
 ‘tribe of *Judah*, the *ROOT OF DAVID*,’ (who,
 however, is but a *mere man*, and did not exist till
 many hundred years after *David’s* death!) ‘hath
 ‘prevailed to open the book, and loote the seven
 ‘seals thereof. And, I beheld, and lo, in the
 ‘midst of the throne, and of the four living
 ‘Creatures, and in the midst of the Elders, stood
 ‘a Lamb, as it had been slain, having seven eyes
 ‘and seven horns, which are the seven Spirits of
 ‘God, sent forth into all the earth: (for, though
 a *mere man*, to him belong the seven Spirits of
 God!) ‘And he came, and took the book out of
 ‘right hand of him that sat upon the throne.
 ‘And when he had taken the book, the four
 ‘living Creatures and the four and twenty Elders
 ‘fell down before the Lamb,—saying, thou art
 ‘worthy to take the book, and open the seals
 ‘thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed
 ‘us unto God, by thy blood, (the blood of a *mere*
 ‘*man!*) out of every kindred and tongue, and
 ‘people and nation: And hast made us unto our
 ‘God, kings and priests.—And I heard the voice
 ‘of many Angels, round about the throne, and
 ‘the living creatures, and the elders: and the
 ‘number of them was ten thousand times ten
 ‘thousand, and thousands of thousands, saying,
 ‘with a loud voice, Worthy is (the *mere man!*)
 ‘the lamb that was slain, to receive power and
 ‘riches, and wisdom and strength, and honour
 ‘and

' and glory and blessing : And every creature
 ' which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under
 ' the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that
 ' are in them, heard I, saying, Blessing, and
 ' honour and glory and power, be unto him that
 ' sitteth upon the throne, (*viz.* to the eternal God)
 ' and to the Lamb, (*a mere man !*) for ever, and
 ' ever ! And the four living creatures said Amen !
 ' And the four and twenty elders fell down, and
 ' worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever !'
 What will the disciples of *Socinus* say to this ?
 Surely, if Christ be a *mere man*, Idolatry is com-
 mitted, even in heaven !

And, as the Father and the Son are associated
 in claiming and receiving divine worship from
 the saints, whether men or Angels, so also, in
 taking vengeance on sinners. Thus, chap. vi. 16.
 ' They said to the mountains and rocks, fall on
 ' us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth
 ' on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb,
 ' (that is the wrath of a *mere man !*) For the great
 ' day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able
 ' to stand ?' Who shall be able to bear the wrath
 of a *mere man !*

Equally remarkable is the following passage :—
 ' After this, I beheld, (chap. vii. 9.) and lo a great
 ' multitude, which no man could number, of all
 ' nations and kindreds and people and tongues,
 ' stood before the throne, (*viz.* of *Jehovah*) and
 ' before the Lamb, (that is, before a *mere man*)
 ' clothed with white robes, and palms in their
 ' their hands, and cried, with a loud voice, saying,
 ' Salvation to our God, who sitteth upon the
 ' throne, and unto the Lamb, (*a mere man !*)
 Here again, according to Dr. *Priestley*, a *mere man*
 is worshipped, and salvation is ascribed to him,
 as well as to the *infinite Jehovah !* And, ver. 13.
 the saints that have come out of great tribulation,
 are

are said to have washed their robes, and made them white in his blood ! ‘ Therefore, (it is added) ‘ are they before the throne of God, and serve ‘ him day and night in his temple : And he that ‘ sitteth on the throne, shall dwell among them, ‘ They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any ‘ more : neither shall the Sun light on them, nor ‘ any heat. For *the Lamb*, (a *mere man*, says the ‘ Doctor!) *who is IN THE MIDST OF THE THRONE*, ‘ shall feed them, and shall lead them to fountains of living water ; and God shall wipe away ‘ all tears from their eyes.’ So that, if the Doctor be right, a *mere man*, in conjunction with the supreme God, is the Author of their everlasting felicity : And Chap. xi. 15. the kingdoms of this world are represented as become *his* kingdoms, and he is said to reign for ever and ever, being (Chap. xvii. 14.) **LORD OF LORDS, AND KING OF KINGS!**

Chapter xix. 11, we meet with a description of this reigning King, a description, which but ill agrees with the character of a *mere man*. ‘ His name, we are assured, is called *faithful* ‘ and *true*, and in righteousness he doth judge and ‘ make war. His eyes are as a flame of fire, and ‘ on his head are many crowns : and he hath a ‘ name written, that *no man knoweth but himself*. ‘ And he is clothed with a vesture dipt in blood : ‘ and his name is called **THE WORD OF GOD!**— ‘ And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, ‘ that with it he should smite the nations : And ‘ he shall rule them with a rod of iron : and he ‘ treadeth the wine-press of the fierceness and ‘ wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his ‘ vesture, and on his thigh, a name written, ‘ **KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.**’

In the 20th Chapter is displayed, ‘ a great white ‘ throne, and he (a *mere man*, shall we say ?) that ‘ sits on it, from whose face the earth and the ‘ heaven

' heaven flee away, and there is found no place
 ' for them: and the dead small and great stand
 ' before God, (Dr. Priestley says, before a mere man!)
 ' and the books are opened,—and the dead are
 ' judged out of those things which are written in
 ' the books, according to their work;—Here the
 mere man appears to be the universal Judge, and
 they that stand before him, are said to stand before
 God! And in the next Chapter, the same person
 is represented as the bridegroom of the Church,
 which has its maker, that is, on the Socinian hypo-
 thesis, a mere man for its husband! ' And he
 ' carried me away in the spirit, to a great, high
 ' mountain,—and shewed me that great city, the
 ' holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from
 ' God, having the glory of God. And I saw no
 ' temple therein; for the Lord God Almighty,
 ' and (a mere man!) the Lamb, are the Temple
 ' of it, and the city had no need of the Sun,
 ' neither of the Moon to shine in it: for the
 ' glory of God, (the infinite Jehovah) did lighten
 ' it, and the Lamb, (a mere man!) is the light
 ' thereof.' As if one were to say, the Sun and
 a Candle are the light of the world! ' And the
 ' nations of them, that are saved, shall walk in
 ' the light of it,' viz. in the light issuing from
 Jehovah, and a mere man! ' And there shall in
 ' no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, but
 ' they who are written in the Lamb's book of
 ' life, (that is, the book of life of a mere man!)

And as Jehovah, and a mere man, are the joint
 sources of light, so of life, and consolation also.—
 For, Chap. xxii. 1. ' He shewed me a pure river
 ' of water of Life, clear as chrystal, proceeding
 ' out of the throne of God, and of the Lamb,
 ' (that is, the throne of Jehovah, and a mere man!)
 ' —And, ver. 3. there shall be no more curse:
 ' but the throne of God (the supreme Being) and
 ' of

‘ of the Lamb (a mere man !) shall be in it ; and
 ‘ his servants shall serve him, and they shall see
 ‘ his face, and his name shall be on their fore-
 ‘ heads.—The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ
 ‘ (that is, the grace of a mere man) be with you
 ‘ all ! Amen !’

Such is the doctrine of St. *John*, in the *Apocalypse* ; doctrine, which, on the Socinian principles, can never be reconciled with common sense. As little will any one be able to reconcile therewith the doctrine concerning Christ, taught in his *Gospel*. This book, according to *Jerom*, (lib. de scriptoribus *Eccles.*) was written after the Epistles, and the *Apocalypse*, at the request of the Bishops of *Asia*, “ against *Cerintus*, and other
 “ Hereticks, and chiefly against the then spread-
 “ ing doctrine of the *Ebionites*, who asserted that
 “ Christ had no existence before *Mary* : for
 “ which reason (he tells us) he was constrained to
 “ speak plainly of his divine generation.”——
 That this account is true, we have every reason to believe, not only from the known veracity of *Jerom*, but also from the nature of the testimony, borne throughout this *Gospel* concerning Christ, a testimony which, if supposed to be meant of a mere man, is certainly, to say the least, not intelligible. The following quotations, make this manifest. ‘ In the beginning was the Word, (viz. ‘ a mere man !) and the Word, (this mere man !) ‘ was with God, and the Word, (the same mere ‘ man) was God ! All things were made by him, (even the whole creation, though it had been made at least 4000 years before he existed !) ‘ and without him, (the same mere man !) was not ‘ any thing made, that was made ! In him, (viz. ‘ in this mere man !) was life, and the life was the ‘ light of men, and the light shineth in darkness, ‘ and the darkness comprehended it not.—*John*, ‘ (a mere man) was not that light, but came to ‘ bear

' bear witness of that light: That (*mere man*, Christ)
 ' was the true light that lighteth every man, that
 ' cometh into the world!' A strange assertion
 truly! ' He (*this mere man*) was in the world, and
 ' the world was made by him, (was made by a
 ' *mere man*!) and the world knew him not: He
 ' came to his own, and his own received him not:
 ' but, as many as received him, to them gave he
 ' (*mere man* as he was!) power to become the sons
 ' of God, even to them that believe in his name.
 ' —And the Word (a *mere man*!) was made flesh.
 I wish Dr. Priestley would tell us what he was
 before he was made flesh,—' and dwelt amongst us,
 ' and we beheld his glory, the glory of the only
 ' begotten of the Father, (that is, the glory of a
 ' *mere man*!) full of grace and truth!' a *mere man*
 full of grace and truth! ' and of his fulness, (the
 ' fulness of a *mere man*!) have all we received
 ' grace for grace. For the Law was given by
 ' Moses, (a *mere man*) but grace and truth came by
 ' Jesus Christ (a *mere man* also!')

I need proceed no further with the testimony
 of St. John. This remarkable passage, placed in
 the front of his Gospel, like the Preamble to an
 Act of Parliament, manifestly shews the design of
 the whole book, and is a key to all those discourses
 of our Lord, and of John the Baptist, recorded
 by this Apostle, in which Jesus is represented as
 the Son, and the *only begotten Son of God*, and is
 declared to have pre-existed, and to have come
 down from heaven. It proves to a demonstration,
 that St. John considered Christ as being the Son
 of God, in a sense in which no other Being, man
 or Angel is his Son, and that he looked upon him
 as pre-existing not as a creature, but as the creating
Logos, or Word of the Father, who, in union with
 the Father, is the Creator and Lord of all crea-
 tures visible and invisible. And as he produces

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the testimony of *John* the Baptist, and of *Christ*, in confirmation of his own testimony, it cannot be doubted, but he understood them in the same light, and methinks, in the same light every one must understand them who believes them to have been possessed of common sense, and impartially considers their testimony. Only let the following passages be attended to without prejudice, and while the absurdity of applying them to a mere man is noticed, let it be observed also how clearly they describe, and how exactly they characterize that *proper* and *only begotten Son* of the Father, who is his very *wisdom* and *word* incarnate, and the Creator and Lord of men and Angels.

John bare witness of him and cried, ' This (*mere man*, shall we say?) ' was he, of whom I ' spake. He that cometh after me, is preferred ' before me; for he, (though a *mere man*, and ' born after me!) ' was before me! ' This is the record of *John*:—' I am the voice of one crying ' in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the ' Lord (that is, the way of a *mere man*!) as said ' the Prophet *Esaias*.—I baptize you with water, ' but there standeth one (*mere man*!) among you, ' whom ye know not:—he it is, who coming after ' me, is preferred before me, whose shoes latchet ' I am not worthy to unloose.—The next day ' *John* seeth *Jesus* coming and saith, Behold the ' Lamb of God, (that is, behold a *mere man*!) who ' taketh away the sin of the world.'—For, though a mere man, he taketh away, or makes atonement for the sins of all men!) ' This is he of whom ' I said, after me cometh a man who is preferred ' before me, for (though a *mere man*!) he was before ' me! And I knew him not, but that he (a *mere man*) should be made manifest to *Israel*, therefore am I come baptizing with water.—And I

knew

‘knew him not: but he that sent me, to baptize
 ‘with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom
 ‘thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remain-
 ‘ing on him, the same is he (*viz.* the *mere man*!)
 ‘that baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw,
 ‘and bare record; that this is the Son of God:’
 (that is, says Dr. Priestley, a *mere man*!)

Again, Chap. iii. 28. ‘I am not the Christ,
 ‘but I am sent before him.—He (the *mere man*!)
 ‘that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the
 ‘friend of the bridegroom that standeth and
 ‘heareth him, rejoiceth greatly, because of the
 ‘bridegroom’s voice: this my joy, therefore, is
 ‘fulfilled.—He must increase, but I must decrease.
 ‘—He, (the *mere man*!) that cometh from above,
 ‘(though a *mere man*) is ABOVE ALL. He that is
 ‘of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the
 ‘earth. He (the same *mere man*) that cometh from
 ‘heaven is ABOVE ALL!’ Will Dr. Priestley tell us
 how it could be said Christ came from heaven, any
 more than John the Baptist, on his principles?
 ‘The Father (addeth he) loveth the Son, and
 ‘hath given all things into his hands. He that
 ‘believeth on the Son (that is on a *mere man*!)
 ‘hath everlasting life, and he that believeth not
 ‘the Son (*viz.* this *mere man*) shall not see life,
 ‘but the wrath of God abideth on him.’

The other Evangelists agree with St. John, re-
 specting the testimony of the Baptist. Thus,
 Matth. iii. 11. ‘I indeed baptize you with water,
 ‘unto repentance: but he (a *mere man*, as say the
 disciples of Socinus) ‘that cometh after me is
 ‘mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy
 ‘to bear, he (though a *mere man*!) shall baptize
 ‘you with the Holy Ghost and with fire. Whose
 ‘fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge
 ‘his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner,
 ‘but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable
 ‘fire.’

Such is the testimony, which, according to the Evangelists, *John* the Baptist bore of Christ, a testimony which they must have judged to be of deep importance, and therefore have recorded with great care, as being a full and perfect confirmation of the views they entertained themselves, and laboured to give others, of Jesus of Nazareth. But, methinks, every reasonable and unprejudiced man must allow that it is a testimony which, if supposed to be born of a mere man, is most ridiculous; nay, and absolutely false. For; if Jesus Christ be a mere man, of no higher origin than *John*, inasmuch as he was born some months after him, it is not true that he was *before him*; much less is it true, that whereas *John* was *from beneath*, he was *from above*, that whereas *John* was of the earth, he was from heaven. According to Dr. *Priestley's* hypothesis, they were equally *from beneath*, equally *from the earth*, and however Christ might be preferred before *John*, yet the reason of that preference could not be that which *John* assigns, viz. that Christ was *before him*, for in reality he was *before Christ*. As to the rest of of his testimony, I make no remark upon it. It is obvious to the most inattentive observer, that it is impossible it should agree with a mere man, who, how much soever he might be honoured or exalted, could never, with any propriety, be said to be *above all*, to have *all things delivered into his hands*, or to be the bridegroom of the church, the owner and possessor of the bride, by believing in whom, she obtained everlasting life; and much less could he be able to baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire, to separate, with infinite discernment, between the precious and the vile, and burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.

I should

I should now proceed to the testimony borne by Christ himself, but having already drawn this Letter out to a sufficient length, I break off here, and subscribe myself,

Rev. Sir,

Yours, &c.

T. 3. LETTER

LETTER XI.

REV. SIR,

ACCORDING to the testimony of the Evangelists, when Jesus was transfigured on the holy mount, there came a voice from the excellent glory, saying, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him.* In obedience to the divine command, let us now attend, while this beloved Son of the Father bears record of himself, that we may learn from his own lips to form a right judgment of his person, made the subject of so much dispute and altercation. Dr. Priestley is fully persuaded, that he is a mere man. In order that we may be able to determine whether the Doctor's opinion be according to truth, let us bring it to the surest of all tests, the test of the doctrine taught by Christ himself. The Doctor, (I think) will not deny that he is the *Amen, the faithful and true witness.* Of consequence an opinion which cannot bear the test of his doctrine is not of God. Let us see, therefore, whether the testimony which he bears of himself be consistent with common sense, on the Socinian principles.

Jesus saw Nathaniel coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile! Nathaniel saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee. Nathaniel answered, and said unto him Rabbi, thou art (a mere man! No! Thou art) the Son of God! Thou art the King of Israel! Jesus answered, and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the
fig

‘fig tree, believest thou? Thou shalt see greater things than these.—Destroy this Temple, and in three days I will raise it up. He spake of the Temple of his body.’ And, is he who spake this a *mere man*? Can a *mere man* raise his own body from death? especially if, according to Dr. Priestley, he have *no soul*, but the whole of him be dead and insensible?

Again, Chap. iii. ‘No man hath ascended up into heaven, but he (the *mere man*, says Dr. Priestley) that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man, who (though a mere man, and now upon earth) is in heaven!—For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, (that is, if we believe the *Socinians*, a *mere man*, of no higher origin than others) that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son (a *mere man*) into the world to condemn the world, but that the world, through him, (that is through one *mere man*) might be saved. He that believeth on him (a mere man) is not condemned, but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.’ I make no reflections on these solemn declarations of our Lord. Every reader must consider them as being both false and absurd, on the supposition of his being a mere man. Again, Chap. iv. ‘If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldst have asked of him.’ That is, according to Dr. Priestley, Thou wouldst have prayed to a *mere man*, and he, (a mere man, though he be) would have given thee living water.’ And who that reads these words, can doubt whether Jesus Christ encouraged prayer to be addressed to him? Again, ‘Whosoever drinketh of the water that I (a mere man) shall give

'give him, shall never thirst, but the water I shall
 'give him shall be in him a well of water spring-
 'ing up unto life eternal.' Here, again, if Jesus
 Christ be a mere man, he manifestly encourages
 idolatry. This he does also, Chap. vii. 37. 'If
 'any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink :
 'He that believeth on me, out of his belly shall
 'flow rivers of living water. This spake he of
 'the Spirit which they that believed on him
 'should receive.'

But what shall we say to the following words ?
 In what light do they appear, if they be consid-
 ered as proceeding out of the mouth of a *mere*
man ? Chap. v. 17. 'My Father (the eternal God)
 'worketh hitherto, and I (a mere man) work !—
 'ver. 19. Verily I say unto you, the Son can do
 'nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father
 'do : FOR WHATSOEVER THINGS HE (the *infinite*
 'Jehovah) DOETH, THESE ALSO DOETH THE SON
 '(a mere man !) LIKEWISE. For the Father (the
 'eternal God) loveth the Son (a mere man !) and
 'sheweth him (though but a man) all things that
 'himself doeth, and will shew him greater works
 'than these, that ye may marvel. For as the
 'Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them,
 'even so THE SON (a mere man !) QUICKENETH
 'WHOM HE WILL. For the Father, (the great
 'God) judgeth no man, but hath committed all
 'judgment unto the Son (a mere man !) that *all*
 'men should HONOUR THE SON, (that is should
 'honour a mere man !) even as they honour (the
 'infinite Jehovah, viz.) the Father ! He that
 'honoureth not the Son (this mere man !) honour-
 'eth not the Father who sent him !—Verily,
 'verily, I say unto you, the hour cometh and
 'now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of
 'the Son of God (viz. the voice of a mere man)
 'and they that hear shall live. For as the Father
 '(the everlasting Jehovah) hath life in himself,
 'so

'so hath he given to the Son (that is to a *mere*
 'man!) to have *life in himself*, and hath given
 'him authority to execute judgment also, because
 'he is the Son of man,'—that is, because he, a
 'mere man, is a mere man! A strange reason truly.
 —Our Lord goes on, 'Marvel not at this, the
 'hour is coming, in which all that are in their
 'graves shall hear his voice (the voice, says Dr.
 'Priestley, of a *mere man*!) and shall come
 'forth.'

Methinks, every reasonable man that considers
 this extraordinary passage must allow that if the
 Lord Jesus be a *mere man* (I speak it with reve-
 rence) he never can be acquitted of the crime,
 which the Jews laid to his charge (Chap. x. 33.)
 I mean the heinous crime of *blasphemy*. Are
 these expressions fit to be used by a *mere man*? or
 by any *mere creature*, however exalted? Put them
 into the mouth of *Gabriel*, and try how they
 sound. 'My Father worketh hitherto, and I
 'work.—Whatsoever things God doth, these doth
 'Gabriel likewise. As God raiseth up the dead
 'and quickeneth them, even so Gabriel quicken-
 'eth whom he will.—God hath committed all
 'judgment unto *Gabriel*, that all men should
 'honour *Gabriel*, even as they honour God. He
 'that honoureth not *Gabriel*, honoureth not God.
 '—The dead shall hear the voice of *Gabriel*, and
 'live. All that are in their graves shall hear his
 'voice, and shall come forth.' Is not this lan-
 guage blasphemous, even from the mouth of the holy
 angel *Gabriel*, who stands before God, and it seems
 is one of the highest order? If even he, or the
 Archangel *Michael* used it, would they not deserve;
 and would they not meet with the condemnation
 of the Devil? And let it not be said, that the
 Angels have no right to use this language, because
 they have not been exalted to the authority and
 power

power to which the Son of man is exalted. For if God will not give his glory to another, as he hath sworn he will not, it is certain no mere creature can be so exalted as to have a right to use such language, which would manifestly be equal himself (as the Jews said) with God.

And then it is not here only that our Lord expresses himself in this manner. He is frequently speaking to the same purpose. Thus, ver. 39. 'Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and it is they that testify of me, and ye will not come to me (that is, according to Dr. Priestley, ye will not come to a mere man!) that ye might have life.'—Again, Chap. vi. 32. 'My Father giveth you the true bread FROM HEAVEN, for the bread of God is he that (mere man, if we believe the Doctor and Socinus, born of Joseph and Mary) who COMETH DOWN FROM HEAVEN, (that is, that cometh from a place where he had never been:) and GIVETH LIFE UNTO THE WORLD.—I, (a mere man!) am the BREAD OF LIFE: he that cometh to me, (mere man, as I am!) shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me, shall never thirst.—All that the Father giveth me shall come unto me, (a mere man!) and him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out. For I (a mere man) CAME DOWN FROM HEAVEN (not that I ever was in heaven) not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one that seeth the Son and believeth on him, may have everlasting life, and I (a mere man!) will raise him up at the last Day.'

The Jews then murmured at him, (as methinks Dr. Priestley, and the Socinians must necessarily do) 'because he said, I am the bread which CAME DOWN FROM HEAVEN?' and they said (in language similar

similar to that of Dr. Priestley, 'Is not this Jesus the
 ' Son of Joseph, whose father and Mother we know?
 ' How is it that he (a mere man) saith I CAME DOWN
 ' FROM HEAVEN?' Jesus, therefore, answered,
 (it would be well if the abettors of the Socinian
 doctrine would weigh the answer) 'Murmur not
 ' among yourselves. No man can come unto me
 ' except the Father who sent me draw him, and I will
 ' raise him up at the last day.—Verily, verily, I say
 ' unto you, He that believeth on me, hath ever-
 ' lasting life: I AM THE BREAD OF LIFE.—ver. 50.
 ' This is the bread that CAME DOWN FROM HEA-
 ' VEN: that a man may eat thereof, and NOT DIE.
 ' I (a mere man, born of Joseph and Mary) am
 ' the LIVING BREAD WHICH CAME DOWN FROM
 ' HEAVEN: if a man eat of this bread, he shall
 ' live for ever: and the bread that I will give is
 ' my flesh, which I will give for the life of the
 ' world.—The whole of this discourse is absurd
 and impious, on the Socinian principles.

Again, ver. 53, 'Except ye eat the flesh of the
 ' Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no
 ' life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drink-
 ' eth my blood, hath eternal life, and I (a mere
 ' man) will raise him up, at the last day. For my
 ' flesh (mere man, though I be) is meat indeed,
 ' and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth
 ' my flesh and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in
 ' me (a mere man!) and I (a mere man!) DWELL IN
 ' HIM.—This is the bread that CAME DOWN FROM
 ' HEAVEN. Not as your Fathers did eat Manna,
 ' and are dead. He that eateth of this bread shall
 ' live for ever.' Certainly, if our Lord be no
 more than a man, he must have intended to mis-
 lead his hearers. He adds, Doth this offend you?
 'What, and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up
 ' where he WAS BEFORE?' Now, if he be a mere
 man, who had no existence till born in Bethlehem,
 he

he asserts a falshood here. He never had been in heaven before. As also, Chap. viii. 'If ye had known me (a mere man) ye would have known my Father also. Ye are from beneath, I am FROM ABOVE: ye are of this world; I AM NOT OF THIS WORLD!' Are these the words of the faithful and true witnesses? Are they the words of soberness and truth? Are these that follow: 'If God were your Father, you would love me, for I PROCEEDED FORTH AND CAME FROM GOD?' — *Your Father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it and was glad.* Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet 50 years old, and hast thou seen Abraham. Jesus said unto them, VERILY, VERILY, I SAY UNTO YOU, BEFORE ABRAHAM WAS, I AM. How distant from common sense, as well as piety, is language like this, proceeding from the mouth of a mere man?

Chap. xth, furnishes us with many examples of a similar kind. 'I (a mere man?) am the door of the sheep:—by me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and shall find pasture.—I (the same mere man) am come, that they might HAVE LIFE, and that they might have it more abundantly. I am the GOOD SHEPHERD; the good Shepherd giveth his life for the Sheep. (I say again, though a mere man) ver. 14. I am the GOOD SHEPHERD, AND KNOW MY SHEEP, AND AM KNOWN OF MINE.) AS the Father knoweth me, (a mere man?) so I (a mere man?) know the Father, and I lay down my life for the Sheep. And other sheep have I, which are not of this fold, them also, I (a mere man) must bring in, and they shall hear my voice, the voice of a mere man, and there shall be one fold, and one Shepherd. Therefore, doth my Father love me, because I LAY DOWN MY LIFE, THAT I (a mere man) MAY TAKE IT AGAIN: 'No

' No man taketh it from me, but I (a mere man)
 ' LAY IT DOWN OF MYSELF: I (a mere man) HAVE
 ' POWER TO LAY IT DOWN, AND I HAVE POWER
 ' TO TAKE IT AGAIN. This commandment have
 ' I received of my Father.—ver. 27. My sheep,
 ' hear my voice, and I (a mere man) KNOW THEM,
 ' and they follow me, and (though a mere man)
 ' I GIVE UNTO THEM ETERNAL LIFE, and they
 ' shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them
 ' out of my hand. My Father that gave them
 ' me is greater than all, and none is able to pluck
 ' them out of my Father's hand. I AND MY
 ' FATHER (that is, if we believe Dr. Priestley, a
 ' mere man, and the eternal God) ARE ONE.'
 Well might the Jews accuse him of blasphemy.
 Surely, if he be a mere man, he cannot be ac-
 quitted of that dreadful crime. For he speaks as
 though the almighty power of the Father were
 his own, to be used by him, at his pleasure, for
 the protection of his sheep. Again, verse 37,
 ' If I (a mere man?) do not the works of my
 ' Father, believe me not: but, if I do: though
 ' ye believe not me, believe the works, that ye
 ' may know and believe that the Father is in me,
 ' and I in him.'

And, methinks, his words to Martha, sound
 very awkwardly, if considered as proceeding from
 the lips of a mere man, ' I (a mere man) am the
 ' RESURRECTION and the LIFE: he that believeth
 ' in me, though he die, yet shall he live.' Divers
 passages, also, in the two next chapters, if under-
 stood, as spoken by a mere man, seem equally ri-
 diculous, as Chap. xii. 26, ' If a man serve me,
 ' (a mere man!) let him follow me.—Yet a little
 ' while, (ver. 35.) is the light (viz. a mere man!)
 ' with you:—while you have the light, believe
 ' in the light:—ver. 45. He that seeth me, seeth
 ' him that sent me.' That is, on the Doctor's
 principles,

principles, He that seeth a *mere man*, seeth the eternal God! ' I (a *mere man*!) am come a light into the word, that whosoever believeth on me, should not abide in darkness. Chap. xiii. 3, ' Jesus (that is a *mere man*) knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he (though a *mere man*, who had no existence till born in *Bethlehem*) was come from God, and went to God,' &c.

But more especially the discourses recorded in the three following Chapters are worthy of our attention in this view. According to the Socinian doctrine, the Lord Jesus addresses his disciples, in the following, and such like language, just before his departure from them. ' Let not your heart be troubled: Ye believe in God, (the supreme Being) believe also in me (a *mere man*!) ' ver. 6, I (a *mere man*) am the way, the truth, and the life, no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. If ye had known me, ye would have known my Father also: (that is, if ye had known a *mere man*, ye would have known the supreme and everlasting God!) and from henceforth, ye know him, and have seen him.—*Philip* saith unto him, Lord shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me (a *mere man*!) *Philip*? He that hath seen me (that hath seen a *mere man*!) hath seen the Father! Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me.—ver. 15, If ye love me, keep my commandments, (the commandments of a *mere man*!) —I will not leave you comfortless, I (a *mere man*!) will come to you. Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more, but ye see me, because I (a *mere man*) live, ye shall live also! —He that loveth me, shall be loved of my Father: and I (a *mere man*) will love him, and will manifest myself to him. If a man love me,

‘me, he will keep my words, (the words of a mere man!) and my Father will love him, and we, (that is both the omnipresent God, and I, a mere man) N. B. *will come unto him, and make our abode with him!*’—Will Dr. Priestley inform us how a mere man can come to, and make his abode with thousands and myriads at the same time? ver. 28, ‘If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said I go to the Father, for my Father is greater than I,’ that is, on the Socinian hypothesis, the Eternal God, is greater than a mere man! A wonderful discovery truly!

He proceeds, Chap. xv, ‘I (a mere man) am the true vine (into which all believers, all the world over, of every nation and age, are ingrafted) my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me, that beareth not fruit, he taketh away.—Abide in me (that is, abide in a mere man) and I (the same mere man) in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, (from which it derives its very being, and to which it is wholly indebted for all its life, growth, and fruitfulness) no more can ye, except ye abide in me (a mere man whose offspring ye are, and on whom ye are dependant, not only for grace, but for life and breath, and all things! Col. i. 16, 17,) He that abideth in me (a mere man) and I (the same mere man) in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit, for without me, (that is without a mere man!) ye can do nothing.’ Strange doctrine, indeed! What! can we do nothing with the help of God, without the help of this mere man? If any man, proceeds he, ‘abide not in me, (the same mere man, even though he may suppose that he abides in the Father) he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered.—If ye abide in me (a mere man!) and my words (the words of a mere man!) abide in you

'you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done for you.—ver. 23, He that hateth me, (a mere man) hateth my Father also,' the Supreme and eternal God!

Pass we on to Chap. xvi. 7.—'If I (a mere man) go not away, the comforter will not come: but if I depart (though I am a mere man!) I will send him unto you.—He shall glorify me, (shall glorify a mere man!) for he shall receive of mine (that is of the things of a mere man!) and shall shew unto you. ALL THINGS THAT THE FATHER (the infinite and supreme God) HATH ARE MINE (they all belong to me, though I am a mere man!) therefore, said I, he shall take of MINE, and shew it unto you.—ver. 27, the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me (a mere man) and have believed th. 2 I CAME FORTH FROM GOD. N. B. I (a mere man, shall we say? Surely, if we say so, we must give the lie to the faithful and true witness) 'I CAME FORTH FROM THE FATHER AND AM COME INTO THE WORLD, AGAIN, I LEAVE THE WORLD, AND GO TO THE FATHER.' That the Lord Jesus spoke, and meant to be understood *literally* is certain, from what follows: 'His disciples said unto him, Lo! now speakest thou plainly: now we are sure that thou knowest all things: by this we believe that thou *camest forth from God!*' That is, according to Dr. Priestley's system, 'we believe a lie!'

How extraordinary is this whole discourse of our Lord, according to the *Socinian* doctrine! How remote from every principle of reason and religion, that we are acquainted with! But what is worst of all, this doctrine makes the Son of God utter this nonsense, nay, I may say, this impiety and blasphemy to his Father, in the most solemn exercise of devotion. Thus, Chap. xvii. 1.
'Father,

' Father, glorify thy Son, (that is, glorify a mere
 ' man!) that thy Son may glorify thee.—O Father
 ' glorify me with thine own self, with the glory,
 ' I (a mere man, born but about 30 years ago)
 ' HAD WITH THEE BEFORE THE WORLD WAS!—
 ' They (my disciples) have *known assuredly, that*
 ' I CAME OUT FROM THEE (though I had no ex-
 ' istence till I was born in *Bethlehem*) and have
 ' believed that thou didst send me.—ver. 10. ALL
 ' MINE ARE THINE, and (though I am a mere
 ' man!) THINE ARE MINE, and, I (the same mere
 ' man!) *am glorified in them*.—And now I am no
 ' more in the world, but these are in the world,
 ' and I come to thee.—Father, I will, that they
 ' whom thou hast given me be with me, where I
 ' am: that they may behold my glory, which thou
 ' hast given me:—for THOU LOVEDST ME BEFORE
 ' THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD,' (*me, who,*
 being a mere man!) had no existence, till a few
 years ago!)

Such is the testimony which, according to St.
John, the Son of God bore of himself, while
 upon earth, in his most solemn discourses to the
Jews, whom he laboured to bring to repentance,
 whom he wept over, and died to redeem; and to
 his *own disciples*, whom he was thus preparing to
 go forth and instruct all nations, and whom, in
 this way, he was arming for persecution, impris-
 onment, and martyrdom; and in his most devout
 and fervent prayers addressed to his Father, just be-
 fore his crucifixion: a testimony which, I will
 venture to say, neither Dr. *Priestley*, nor all the
Socinians in the world will ever be able to reconcile,
 with the doctrine of our Lord's mere humanity,
 on the principles of common sense. As little will
 they be able to reconcile therewith, the testimony
 which the other Evangelists record him to have
 born. Two or three passages only, I shall pro-
 duce, as a specimen of the rest. Thus, Matt. xi.

27, 28. ' All things are delivered unto me, (that is, if we believe the *Socinians*, unto a *mere man*) ' of my Father : and no man knoweth the Son (that is, knoweth a *mere man*!) but the Father, neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, (the same *mere man*!) and he, to whomsoever the Son shall reveal him. Come unto me (that is come unto a *mere man*!) all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I (a *mere man*!) will give you rest! Take my yoke upon you (the yoke of a *mere man*!) and learn of me.—For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.—Upon this rock will I (a *mere man*!) build my church, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it.—For, where two or three are met together in my name, I (a *mere man*!) am there, in the midst of them.' —(For, though a *mere man*, I am *omnipresent*!)—All power is given unto me (that is, is given unto a *mere man*!) in heaven and on earth: Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, (the true, living and eternal God) and of the Son (a *mere man*!) and of the Holy Ghost (the power of God!) —teaching them to observe all things whatsoever, I (a *mere man*!) have commanded you: and lo! I (a *mere man*!) am with you always, even unto the end of the world.' For, I say again, though a *mere man*, I am *omnipresent*, and can and will be with you, be you ever so many thousands and myriads, at all times and in all places! An extraordinary promise indeed, to proceed from the lips of a *mere man*!

Once more, and I have done. We have reviewed the testimony born by Christ, while upon earth, in the days of his humiliation, and have found it inconsistent with common sense, on the principles of *Unitarianism*. Let us now attend to the testimony born by him, since his ascension into heaven. This, I am persuaded, we shall find equally

equally, if not more irreconcilable therewith, on the same principles.

Rev. ii. 1. ' These things, saith he, (the mere man!) that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, and walketh in the midst of the seven golden Candlesticks: (being always present with and among his people, though a mere man!) ' *I (a mere man) know thy works*, and thy labour and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear those that are evil:—Nevertheless, I (a mere man!) have against thee, that thou hast left thy first love. Remember, therefore, from whence thou art fallen, and repent:—or else, I (a mere man! confined in heaven, till the restitution of all things!) will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of its place.—' To him that overcometh, will I (though a mere man) give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God!—ver. 8. Unto the Angel of the Church of *Smyrna* write. These things saith the FIRST AND THE LAST (that is, says Dr. *Priestley*, a mere man!) who was dead, and is alive. *I KNOW THY WORKS*, and thy tribulation and thy poverty.—Fear none of those things, which thou shalt suffer. But be thou faithful unto death, and I (a mere man!) will give thee a crown of life.—ver. 12. To the Angel of the Church of *Pergamus*. These things saith he (the mere man!) who hath the sharp sword, with two edges. *I KNOW THY WORKS*—but I have a few things against thee.—' Repent, or else, I (the same mere man!) will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them, with the sword of my mouth.—To him that overcometh, will I (a mere man!) give to eat of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth, saving he that
receiveth

' receiveth it.—ver. 18, Unto the Angel of the
 ' Church of *Thyatira* write. These things saith
 ' the SON OF GOD, (whom the Socinians think a
 ' mere man, but) who hath *his eyes like unto a flame*
 ' of fire, and his feet like fine brass.—I (a mere
 ' man!) KNOW THY WORKS, and the last to be
 ' more than the first. Notwithstanding I have a
 ' few things against thee, that thou permittest that
 ' woman *Jezebel* to teach and seduce MY SERVANTS:
 ' and I (a mere man!) GAVE HER SPACE TO RE-
 ' PENT, and she repented not. Behold, I (the
 ' same mere man!) will cast her into a bed, and
 ' them that commit adultery with her, into tribu-
 ' lation. And I will kill her children with death:
 ' and ALL THE CHURCHES SHALL KNOW THAT I
 ' (a mere man!) AM HE THAT SEARCHETH THE
 ' REINS AND THE HEART! And I will give unto
 ' every one of you according to your works. But,
 ' unto you I SAY, and the rest at *Thyatira*,—I (a
 ' mere man) WILL PUT UPON YOU no other bur-
 ' den, but that which you have already, hold fast
 ' till I come. And he that overcometh and keep-
 ' eth MY WORD to the end, will I (a mere man!)
 ' GIVE POWER over the nations, and he shall rule
 ' them with a rod of iron, and I WILL GIVE HIM
 ' the morning star.—Chap. iii. 1. Unto the Angel of
 ' the Church of *Sardis* write, These things saith
 ' he, (the mere man!) that HATH THE SEVEN SPI-
 ' RITS OF GOD, and the seven stars.—I (the same
 ' mere man) KNOW THY WORKS.—Be watchful and
 ' strengthen the things which remain, for I HAVE
 ' NOT FOUND thy works perfect before God. If
 ' thou wilt not watch, I (a mere man) will come
 ' unto thee, as a thief, and thou shalt not know
 ' what hour I will come unto thee.—He that over-
 ' cometh, the same shall be clothed in white rai-
 ' ment, and I (a mere man) WILL NOT BLOT
 ' OUT his name out of the book of life, but I will
 ' confess

' confess his name before my Father, and before
 ' his Angels.—ver. 7. To the Angel of the church
 ' in *Philadelphia*,—These things, saith (a mere
 ' man? No! but) HE THAT IS HOLY, HE THAT
 ' IS TRUE, *he that hath the key of David! he that*
 ' OPENETH and NO MAN shutteth, and SHUTTETH;
 ' and NO MAN openeth. I KNOW THY WORKS:
 ' Behold, I (a mere man!) HAVE SET BEFORE
 ' thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for
 ' thou hast a little strength, and hast kept MY
 ' WORD, and hast not denied MY NAME (the word
 ' and name of a mere man!) Behold, I (a mere
 ' man, as I am!) will make them of the syna-
 ' gogue of Satan,—to come and worship at thy
 ' feet, and to know that I have loved thee. Be-
 ' cause thou hast kept the word of MY PATIENCE:
 ' I ALSO (though but a man!) WILL KEEP THEE
 ' from the hour of temptation, which shall come
 ' upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon
 ' the earth. Behold I come quickly! Hold
 ' that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy
 ' crown.—ver. 14. To the Angel of the Church
 ' of the *Laodiceans*,—These things saith the AMEN;
 ' the FAITHFUL AND TRUE WITNESS, the BEGIN-
 ' NING (*αρχη*, the principle, origin, head, and
 ' governour) OF THE CREATION OF GOD, I (a
 ' mere man!) KNOW THY WORKS, that thou art nei-
 ' ther cold nor hot. So then, because thou art luke-
 ' warm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee
 ' out of my mouth.—I counsel thee to buy of me
 ' (that is of a mere man!) gold tried in the fire,
 ' that thou mayest be rich, and white raiment,
 ' that thou mayest be clothed.—As many as I
 ' love, I (a mere man) rebuke and chasten. Be
 ' zealous, therefore, and repent. BEHOLD I (a
 ' mere man) STAND AT THE DOOR AND KNOCK.
 ' If any man hear my voice and open the door (for
 ' I am present at the door of all hearts!) I WILL
 ' COME

'COME IN TO HIM, and sup with him, and he
 'with me. To him that overcometh, will I
 '(though but a *man*!) grant to sit down with me,
 'on my throne, even as I also overcame, and am
 'sat down with the Father on his throne. He
 'that hath an ear, let him hear what the spirit
 'saith (that is what Christ saith by his Spirit)
 'unto the Churches,' and let him consider, whe-
 ther they are the words of a *mere man*! And
 that he may not pass a matter of such moment
 over slightly, let him turn to the last Chapter of
 this book, and reflect upon the Toleran and awful
 testimony borne by the same person, ver. 7,
 'Behold, I come quickly: Blessed is he that
 'keepeth the sayings of the Prophecy of this
 'book.—ver. 12. Behold, I come quickly, and
 'my reward (shall we say the reward of a *mere*
 '*man*?) is with me to give every one, according
 as his work shall be. I (though viewed by some
 'as a *mere man*!) am ALPHA AND OMEGA, THE
 'BEGINNING AND THE END, THE FIRST AND
 'THE LAST.' And let me assure you, 'I, Jesus,
 'have sent mine Angel to testify unto you, these things
 'in the Churches.' And, if you still be ignorant
 who I am, and therefore, be in danger of not paying
 a due regard to my testimony, let me inform you
 further, that I am both *God* and *man*, both the
Son of God, and *Son of Man*; let me affirm that,
 "I AM THE ROOT AND OFFSPRING OF DAVID,
 "AND THE BRIGHT AND MORNING STAR." And
 that you may not only give credit to what I say,
 but lay it to heart, with that seriousness, which
 its importance demands, I, the same person, *that*
testify these things, add, '*surely, I come quickly.*'
Amen, even so, come Lord Jesus, and give the
 opposers of thy Divinity to know, that thou art
 more than a *mere man*! Not doubting, Rev. Sir,
 but

but you will join with me, and the church universal, in this important petition, and hoping that the time approaches, when the Son of God will appear for himself, and shew the Universe *who*, and *what* he is ; I here put a period to this little work, and subscribe myself,

Your obedient Servant,

In the same Christ Jesus,

JOS. BENSON.

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